DISCOVERY OF FACTS

Origin and the real meanings
of
Aarya, Varṇa, Jaati and Liṅga

Sediyapu Krishna Bhatta

Translated by:

Padekallu Narasimha Bhatta

Rashtrakavi Govind Pai Samshodhana Kendra
UDUPI - 576 102

1996

DISCOVERY OF FACTS : Origin and the real meanings of *Aarya, Varṇa, Jaati* and *Liṅga*—*Author* : Sediyapu Krishna Bhatta, A-6, Kailas Quarters, Manipal – 576 119.

Translated by : Padekallu Narasimha Bhatta, M.A., Karopady - 574280, D.K.

Published by : Rashtrakavi Govind Pai Samshodhana Kendra, Kunjibettu, UDUPI - 576 102, Karnataka, India.

First Edition (Of original version in Kannada) : 1991

First Impression : 1996
(Of English version)

Pages : xxii + 108

Price : Rupees Three Hundred only

ISBN : 81-86668-01-2

Computer Typeset by :

'Navadurga Lasertech', Shyamala Sadana, Katte Acharya Road Kunjibettu, UDUPI - 576 102.

Printed at : Manipal Power Press, Press Corner, Manipal - 576 119.

CONTENTS

Publisher's Note

The Rashtrakavi Govind Pai Samshodhana Kendra, a premier institute of high academic standard, is an integral unit of the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial College. It was started in the year 1965, with the recognition as a research institute leading to Post-graduate Doctoral research, first given by the Mysore University and subsequently by the Mangalore University.

The Kendra is serving the scholarly world in a three-fold manner - encouraging Research, Publications and organizing extension lectures. It has successfully conducted quite a few national and international seminars. Twelve scholars have got their Ph.D. degrees after conducting their research under the auspices of the Kendra and a few more are on the verge of submitting their thesis. It has a score of good publications to its credit. The publications of the Research Papers of the late Manjeshwar Govinda Pai in one volume (1400 pages) is a landmark in the world of publication.

The Government of Karnataka sanctioned a lexicon project for the benefit of the speakers of the local Tulu language and the two final volumes, IV and V, are nearing completion.

We always take pleasure in encouraging local scholars either by arranging lectures here in the centre or in other centres nearby and also by publishing their valuable monographs. Most of our publications have been in Kannada.

But we are now launching on an adventure of publishing an English version of a unique work by the great scholar wellversed both in ancient lore and in modern thought, Vidwan Sediyapu Krishna Bhat. The nonagenerian scholar has published a monograph in Kannada on the words *Aarya, Varṇa, Liṅga and Jaati* – descerning the meaning of the words in an original way. The translation of this work into English by P. Narasimha Bhat

titled as "Discovery of Facts" is being published under the auspices of the Govind Pai Samshodhana Kendra.

We are happy to offer this title to the scholarly world at large. We thank Vidwan Sediyapu Krishna Bhat for giving us an opportunity to bring out one of his most original contributions to the interpretation of history.

We acknowledge the help of the following scholars in bringing out this work: Sri Padekallu Narasimha Bhat, Dr. C. N. Ramachandran, Dr. B. Damodar Rao, Dr. N. Thirumaleshwara Bhat, Dr. Pallathadka Keshava Bhat, Padekallu Vishnu Bhat and others.

M/s. Navadurga Lasertech, Sri Jayadeva and the authorities of Manipal Power Press also deserve our gratitude for the neat execution of this work.

Udupi - 576 102 **Heranje Krishna Bhat**
June 8, 1996

FOREWORD

It was back in 1960s when Sree Sediyapu Krishna Bhat spent sometime at West Mambalam, Madras. Attracted by his original contribution to Kannada literature. Prof. B. G. L. Swamy wanted to talk to him personally and incidentally I served as go-between. After spending that evening with scholarly discussion I developed keen interest in Sree Sediyapu's works. Prof. Swamy till his death in Oct. 1980 remembered and appreciated the finest quality of work done by Sree Sediyapu Krishna Bhat.

Since 1984 I have tried to maintain close contact with Sree Sediyapu Krishna Bhat. In recent years his precious contributions to Kannada grammar and literature are worth imitation which any prestigious Universities around the world would attempt to include in their publication lists, because of their caliber.

Even at this advanced age of 94 Sree Sediyapu Krishna Bhat maintains a very good memory and discernment even if his eyesight has suffered and his movements are restricted. He has trained a few youngsters in his way of thinking, reading, writing and logical reasoning. He thanks them for having learnt such good lessons. Most of them felt honoured by forming part of the machinery to publication process including manuscript writing, proof reading and arranging the bibliographic references etc.

Discovery of facts regarding the origin and real meanings of just four words constitutes the theme of this monumental work.

Specialists who are trained in the extant educational system based on Cartesian science and European view points may not be ready to accept these views due to the following reasons:

1. Ignorance
2. Not acceptable to the "facts" they were told by Western scholars or others.

3. Fear of being considered as "outcastes" if they accept these revolutionary view points.
4. Insufficient ability to go through so may fields of knowledge simultaneously.
5. Drawbacks in the system that fragments everything including knowledge.

The author throws out a conditional challenge (I take it as a blessing gift) to the younger generation when he says that the path to glory involves sincere curiosity, necessary thinking capacity, constant perseverance and a lot of patience.

This fact contrasts very well with the low profile of research and lack of originality accompanied by malpractices of diverse kind including the award of bogus Ph.D. degrees to satisfy the legal requirements during promotions and economic gains being publicly criticised since 1992.

The early impression on the kneeling posture of prayer and its incoherence in *Sanaatana Dharma* paved the way to investigate many errors, interpretations and concepts found in texts old and new. Most of these are much influenced by the cultural, linguistic and motivated interests.

पुराणमित्येव न साधु सर्वम् ।
न चापि काव्यं नवमित्यवद्यम् ।।
सन्तः परीक्ष्यान्यतरद्भजन्ते ।
मूढः परप्रत्ययनेय बुद्धिः ।।

puraaṇamityeva na saadhu sarvam
na caapi kaavyam navamityavadyam
santaḥ pariikṣyaanyataradbhajante
muuḍhaḥ parapratyayaneya buddhiḥ

- Kalidasa.

The author has repeatedly cited the complete original texts to prove beyond any doubts points in question, whether on caste, words, customs or otherwise. Healthy discussion, very rare

indeed among modern authors, to discover the hidden aspects is a special original methodology of the author worth following. Creative thinking, sustained scrutiny of every piece of evidence through more than sixty years, logical analysis of available data and obvious inevitable conclusions are precise steps to be followed in this method of research.

With the treatment given to these four words with constructive criticism and armed with literary support the author presents a logical sequence from the word *Aarya* through the caste, casteism and *liṅga* linking one with the other exhibiting scholarly discussions all through.

The methodology followed in this research work may be fruitfully utilised by researchers interested in fields like sociology, anthropology, iconography, architecture, history, grammar, religion and other similar branches of knowledge.

The author solves the gamut of problems surrounding the word *Aarya*: the etymological significance of the word, the precise location, the relative positions of the sociological arrangements in the past, their evolution, division of labour, duties and responsibilities in the society and so on. While maintaining the mainstream at high pitch, supporting evidences as foot notes or explanatory essays appear side by side. The fluidity of thoughts and events follows a logical sequence from *Aarya* through caste and isms or even the gender problems.

Once again it is shown beyond doubts that all are given equal opportunity but due to difference in individual capacity there is heterogeneity in the society and there is the basis of strength for humanity.

An impersonal symbolic representation of the almighty God with a piece of smooth marble has been in vogue as Shivalinga. The dancing of Shiva has been depicted as *Naṭaraaja* (नटराज) The *Aakaaśatatva* (आकाशतत्त्व) being expressed as *Chidambara Rahasya* (चिदम्बररहस्य) may be attainable by source.

But a common man requires some kind of object to consider and worship as God. This symbolic representation has been misinterpreted by many authors. The interpretation given in this book should expel any doubt from the Phallus worshippers who are evidently biased or totally ignorant of the real meaning. It is a very beautiful essay depicting all the aspects of the problem. Once again the mastery of research work through decades sets aside all other misinterpretations in foreign as well as Indian literature.

It is interesting to note that each one of us has four facets of work no matter the selected field in daily life: Thinking and planning, protecting our belongings, negotiate commercial dealings or administrate the economy and of course, manual work. According to the nature of predominant work done due position is attained in the society sharing just and respective duties and responsibilities as well as enjoying corresponding benefits.

There was no question of exploitation until the foreigners misinterpreted and mixed up the whole establishment for their gains on all grounds but the damage done to the world has no limits.

Children learning things from their parents in action is nothing new to those who live in the villages. This is specially so if the parents have specific professions to follow. That is why by the time a child attains adulthood he or she attains mastery in respective areas of activities. (Weavers of silk at Kanchipuram, for example) Many of the family secrets are passed on from generation to generation precisely by this method. Some creative individuals add new concepts into this system. This provides for the safety on one side, complete training with minute details to attain perfection to feel proud of the finest quality of the produce on the other. That is why even a child can take the boat in deep waters safe and smooth. A farmer incorporates his children into farmwork early so that as grownups nature would have taught

them right things at right time with precision. The "sons of the soil" is the expression normally used by many. This social structure, the open university concept found in the *Aaryan* civilization has been misunderstood and misinterpreted and misguided people leading to disastrous consequences and utter confusion at diverse levels.

It is high time to rewrite the whole process as rightly argued by the author. The casteism, reservation muddle and suppression of meritorious talents leading to inevitable "brain-drain" all have practical solution in the ancient texts. First of all understand correctly the sociological implications of functions attributed to each caste consolidating their mutual delimitations. The ancient texts should serve as guidelines for such planning.

Every profession can be classified whether it involves theoretical think-tank or planning sector, administrative, vigilance or manual labour. As per training received for each person the merit alone is considered in the first place. But when the question of more than one person is in the contest select the one fit for that category on priority basis. Perhaps some examples may clarify the idea:

In a school	:	Teaching staff
		Vigilance
		Administrative staff
		Manual Labour
In the Government	:	Planning Commission
		Judiciary, law and order
		Executive
		Clerical staff.
In military	:	Strategic command
		Vigilance
		Administration
		Soldiers.

The author makes it clear that by birth every one is a *Śuudra*. It is only through proper "education" that one attains the "second birth" *(Dvija)*. This process called *Upanayanam* is a social ritual in the Vedic community, a step to learn a specific field of specialisation.

Such practical solutions to day to day problems are possible through correct understanding and interpretation of ancient texts whether Indology, sociology, anthropology or any other field of knowledge.

People at the top decision taking level - technical experts as well as real leaders - should be properly trained in these lines and the author has opened a new clear vision of old panorama and at the outset has thrown a conditional challenge to the younger generation to be sincere seekers of the glory.

An article on *Draaviḍa-Gauḍa* first published in 1929 but expanded suitably based on additional proof is yet another example of sustained interest on lines of research even after sixty years. Any reasonable reader will get convinced with the proof and agree with the conclusions arrived at by the author.

The whole is more than the sum of fractions. The author has rightly argued the need to consider the complete context or at least refer to the sentence as a whole for comments, analysis or interpretation. Many instances of earlier authors, mainly heralded by foreigners or their blind followers trained in foreign systems, who have taken portions of sentences or a line from a *śloka* to criticise the Indian culture or customs.

One of the peculiarities of Sanskrit as a language is the usage of several terms to denote one object or a phenomenon, unlike other Western languages where a word has just one correct meaning or usage. The relative position or the way a word is coined or split to express its root and its usage are all important considerations which demonstrate the richness of Sanskrit heritage. On some occasions unnecessary repetitions of one and

the same word in a paragraph or even on a single page can easily be eliminated by using synonyms, to a great extent.

Sree Krishna Bhat has demonstrated the plurality of names for one and the same God, Indra being referred to as *Asura*. In the course of discussing words like *Gauḍa* or derivation of *Brahminism* with cryptic comments he deeply regrets the errors committed even by Indian Universities in their publications.

When the fraction of *śloka* oft quoted to create racial hatred among Indian people – *Śudras* as born of feet of *Viraṭpuruṣa* – is seen against the background of the whole *śloka*, the picture becomes clearer and anyone would appreciate the sociological oneness of the extant community from a functional point of view. The present-day racial discrimination whether in India, Middle East, Brazil, Australia, Spain or Ireland could get a correct solution if only the Vedic texts were correctly read and interpreted.

The modern trend in Indology or anthropology to focus attention on micro level to understand the heterogeneous mega level of the society as a whole, will lead to confusion due to fragmenting the process. In a modern society to analyse or interpret the sociological significance of some ritual by a specific sector of the community has no meaning at all. That was why the concept of abstract ideas was misunderstood and misinterpreted; even Puranas may have drawbacks since they are literary expressions of abstract ideas.

Consideration of *Aaryaavarta* located along the Gangetic plains in between Himalayas to the north and Vindhyas to the south, attains significance from a cosmic view point. The adjoining area considered as *Brahmaavarta* where the Vedas were revealed coincides with a geographic locality unique on this planet. On the 21st June the relative position of the planet is such that the sun makes Zenith over this area. The two equinoxes and the other solstice days the sunlight makes Zenith along watermass, either pacific or Atlantic oceans. 23° 27' 30" Northern latitude at 90° longitude East constitutes the expression of

northern most point on the path of the sunlight delimiting the tropical zone where the sun makes zenith just above Bengal. Again all the energy on this planet proceeds from the sun and most of the ancient civilizations adore the Sun God as the Supreme by thousands of names.

Another aspect not much explained in this book is the position of the woman in the Vedic society. The esteem with which women are held high, the due protection needed for her are all laws prescribed by Manu. For example, there is a provision not to collect fare from pregnant women in a boat ride. By going through the entire sentences and chapters the meaning is clearer. Again, much of the values may be different under different paradigms. For example, in Vedic civilization, one has to remove shirts to eat whereas in the modern Western civilization one should dress up to be present for dinner parties. One should not judge others from different paradigms without understanding them completely.

An earnest seeker, an able teacher and an intellectual giant are little words to express this conscious humane thinktank that is Sree Sediyapu Krishna Bhat, an ideal author.

The methodology of discussion and presentation of facts and supportive evidence are examples for new scientific models for humanity.

I thank the author for this opportunity to write a few lines about this scholarly book. I fully endorse his views expressed herein. I wish that other books from the same author get good response from the readers.

May 3, 1996 **Prof. Dr. P. Keshava Bhat,** M.Sc., Ph.D.

Translator's Note

It has been a pleasant excercise to translate Sri Sediyapu Krishna Bhat's *Tathyadarśana.* To use his own words, the author has not written much, but has presented only such ideas as have been verified by a lifelong, intellectual pursuit after them. Though educated in a purely traditional manner, he has expanded his vision in all the directions pertaining to human life and has acqainted himself with the various disciplines of modern interest such as sociology, history, religion, linguistics, in addition to the conventionalized studies like grammar, metrics etc. The last two being his most favourite subjects, he has brought to light some of the most original findings concerning them. The most fruitful outcome of such pursuits of his has been the treatise entitled *Chandogati* which has been acclaimed as an unsurpassed contribution to the study of metrics both in originality and in presentation. The crux of the argument in the early chapters of this work is that the metrical concept *laya* has been wrongly used for the one *gati* (equivalent to "rhythm" in English) over the recent centuries and the author here categorically asserts that the blunder was committed by the westerners first and got subsequently injected into the Indian mind which has sunk in the adoration of the west in the present epoch. The later chapters speak of *gati* as an evaluatory principle. The science of metrics which is condemned to-day as dry information about the counting of letters and syllables attains here, for the first time as it were, the critical importance as complementary to the subjects like music and aesthetics.

The book which now appears in translation has a wider appeal because the study herein is not confined to any such conventional subjects but outgrowing such boundaries takes up some of the fundamental issues pertaining to the study, beliefs and practices of this country and its culture. Side by side with

this, it throws light on a biographical element also of the author pointing to an instance which prompted him to examine originally the west-based writings about our country, whenever he happened to read them.

The book contains three chapters. The first examines the etymology of the word *aarya*. The derivative is traced to the root *ṛ* meaning "to plough". It is also shown that the root is the cognate of the one from which the English words like "arable" are derived, adding support to the fact that the root definitely meant "agriculture" in its origin. By adding a primary suffix to this root the word *arya* is formed. Though the word means "merchant" in current Sanskrit originally it must have denoted an agriculturist in the sense "cultural". Agriculture is the original culture, as accepted by all historians and this made the word *arya* mean "a cultured one". The word *aarya* is a further derivative of *arya* by adding a secondary suffix giving it an adjectival and in general sense "cultured".

The word was mistaken by the westerners for one denoting a race in contrast with another word *draaviḍa* which, as they concluded, denoted another race. The reason for the contrast was the occurrence of the words *dasyu* (= *draviḍa*) and *aarya* in the senses "uncivilized" and "civilized" respectively in the ancient Sanskrit literature.

Another word which adds to the confusion is *varṇa*. The popular meaning of this word is "colour". In the Hindu tradition the four major castes are termed *varṇas*. Of the four *varṇas*, the first three are believed to be superior and the last inferior. Since the white and the dark colours are generally believed to be superior and inferior respectively, the *aaryas* who were white must have distinguished themselves from the *draaviḍas* who were dark. As time passed, the three upper castes also got divided within themselves and thus the four castes came to be established, as based purely on birth.

The author suspects that this is more probably a contrivance or concoction than a mistake made by the westerners. Whether deliberate or incidental, the interpretation is a wrong one. The explanation of the word *draaviḍa* also, as offered by him, is worth noting: the noun base *dru* denotes a tree in Sanskrit. By adding the suffix *ila* which causes euphonic and phonetic changes the word *draaviḍa* can be formed. The meaning will be "(a region) full of trees". The people occupying such regions came to be called *draaviḍas*.

The author explains the word *varṇa* also in the same manner. The word is traceable to the root *vṛ* (वृ) meaning "to choose". Further, in the current Sanskrit also the word *varṇa* has the meaning "fame" (due to skill in a particular profession). When a profession is pursued hereditarily for generations maximum skill is acquired. The members of the ancient Hindu society took to the professions according to their aptitude and passed it on to the next generations in the interest of efficiency. Thus the four major classes were formed. This was known as the *varṇavyavasthaa* which had nothing to do with colour or superiority-inferiority feeling. The gap between the *varṇas* widened and in course of time birth being equated with *varṇa*, the *jaati* arose.

Chapter II deals with the problem of the interpretation of the Vedas. Two approaches are current today: one formed by the natives and the other by the westerners. Among the native commentators Saayana is the best-known and Max Muller is prominent among the westerners. Both are under the influence of their contemporary attitudes and fail to reach the exact import of the ancient works. The proper approach would be to follow the line struck by the ancient authorities like Yaaska who, because of their comparative proximity to the text, would be much more reliable. Further, Yaaska has hinted that three layers of meaning may be recognized as applicable to the Vedas namely, the

aadhyaatmika (spiritualistic), the *aadhidaivika* (theological) and the *aadhibhautika* (materialistic).

Chapter III presents the different kinds of worship practised by the Hindus, with their historical background. Every mode has a rational basis and has come into existence in order to serve the need of the then generations limited by a spatio-temporal environment. Certain types, like the daily Sun ritual, have a wider appeal and go beyond such limitations. Some are meant for individuals while some for the mass. Practices like meditation are intellectual while observances like worship are emotional. The main object of the author in writing this section seems to drive home the point that the symbol worship of Siva has been mistaken by the westerners for phallus worship for two reasons: one is that the Sanskrit word for symbol is *liṅga* which also means sex, gender etc. and the other is the object symbolizing Siva in worship resembles the (male) genital organ in shape. According to the author, the instances of phallus worship are not totally absent in India, but the Siva symbol should not be mistaken for it. While adducing reasons for establishing that *liṅga* means "symbol" he cites the instance of a devotional verse in which Vishnu also, like Siva, is associated with *liṅga.* The derogatory words like polytheism, idolatry etc. used by the westerners in connection with Hinduism are all explained as based on mistaken notions.

Some of the relevant topics felt by the author as omitted in the three chapters are supplemented by appendices. One such is about the meaning of the words *gauḍa* and *draaviḍa* and another regarding the place of the origination of the Vedas.

As translator, I went through this book word by word. In a prefatory note, the author says that he had the ambition of presenting the contents of this book with utmost perfection. But the declining age and the loss of eye-sight stood in his way and the work did not come out as he desired. Still the originality of approach, clarity of thought and precision in writing which have

become part of his life continue to have their stamp on this work also.

The following points may be noted regarding the method adopted in the translation:

1. The translation of the title as "Discovery of Facts" was suggested and finalized by the author himself.

2. It is usual for the modern writers to refer to the revealed literature of the Hindus in the plural number as "Vedas" on the ground that they are four, namely, *Ṛk, Yajus, Saama* and *Atharvan*; but I preferred the singular form *(Veda)* since their spirit does not permit such plurality; the plural is used only in places where the four texts are specifically meant.

3. Instead of the anglicized "Brahmin" I retained the original *"Braahmaṇa"* to bring out the connotation, "learned in the Vedic lore"; the anglicized form is used in places where the word is a mere conventional appellation.

4. Non-English words are minimized though the English equivalents which may be often only approximate.

5. Fidelity to the original is more cared for than effective presentation.

I am most thankful to the author for having assigned me this worthy responsibility. Sri Padekallu Vishnu Bhat who put me in contact with the author deserves to be thanked with warmth and respect.

April 14, 1996 **Padekallu Narasimha Bhat**

Method of Transliteration

Vowels :

Short Vowels	Long Vowels
a/A (अ)	aa/Aa (आ)
i/I (इ)	ii/Ii (ई)
u/U (उ)	uu/Uu (ऊ)
ṛ/Ṛ (ऋ)	-
e/E (ए)	ee/Ee (ಏ) *[Used in the citations from Kannada language]*
ai/Ai (ऐ)	-
o/O (ओ)	oo/Oo (ಓ) *[Used in the citations from Kannada language]*
au/Au (औ)	-
am (अं/अम्)	aam (आं/आम्)
aḥ (अः)	aaḥ (आः)

Consonants:

Unaspirated	Aspirated
ka (क)	kha (ख)
ga (ग)	gha (घ)
ca (च)	cha (छ)
ja (ज)	jha (झ)
ṭa (ट)	ṭha (ठ)
ḍa (ड)	ḍha (ढ)
ta (त)	tha (थ)
da (द)	dha (ध)
pa (प)	pha (फ)
ba (ब)	bha (भ)

Nasals:

ṅa (ङ)	ña (ञ)
ṇa (ण)	na (न)
ma (म)	

Semivowels:

ya (य)	ra (र)
la (ल)	va (व)
śa/Śa (श)	ṣa/Ṣa (ष)
sa (स)	ha (ह)
ḷa (ळ)	ḻa & ṟ (ೞ,ಱ) *[Used in the citations from Kannada and Tamil.]*
kṣa (क्ष)	jña (ज्ञ)

Note:

- *Vowel sequences denote lengthening of the vowel.*
- *Diacritical marks denote special characters.*
- *Citations and non-English words (which are not common in English) are given in italics.*

SUBMISSION

I am submitting this intellectual writing to readers with humble gratitude to Divine Grace which has granted me this good opportunity of making these thoughts public, that have haunted my mind since my boyhood itself. Since the preliminaries have been put under the title "Introductory", much need not be said here. I have only to record here my indebtedness to my friends who have helped me by taking interest both in the preparation and the publication of this book.

First, two youngsters should be thanked: (1) Kumari Hemalatha U.K. who worked as my scribe in the preparation of the rough copy of the manuscript of the present book. She is my grand daughter by relation, an M.A., of sterling character, and happens to be a lecturer in a Junior College in this neighbourhood. (2) Sri K. Padmanabha Kekunnaya, M.A., assistant editor of the Tulu Lexicon under preparation at Udupi. The major portion of the rough copy and the whole of the fair copy were written by him. Further, he has perused some of the original sources relevant to the introductory notes. Both of these youngsters have selflessly helped me to serve my motherland to a small extent. No praise would suffice to do justice to their fine taste, courtesy, patience and help. It is my incessant prayer that God bless them with a brilliant career.

It has given me great pleasure that the office bearers of the *'Saahitya Sangha, Manipal'*, have, of their own accord, come forward to publish this book as they did previously in the case of my Kelavu Deeśanaamagaḷu and Kannaḍa Chandassu. For this I offer my thanks as well as blessings to Sri Polali Balakrishna Shetty, who is the chief executive of this association and a young friend of mine.

I am greatly indebted to Dr. P. Keshava Bhat, a botonist and a noble man, who has kindly and thoroghly gone through the book and written a good foreword to it enhancing the value thereof and to Sri Ambalapady Krishna Rao who had written a foreword to the original edition of this book in Kannada. (See the back cover page.)

Lastly, a humble request to the readers: all the ideas presented here may kindly be examined with an open-mind and be given publicity if they are found convincing. Those who are not convinced should refute these ideas only on the basis of original evidence, but not by quoting others. May they kindly take part in the holy task of bringing to light the true character of the ancient history of our country.

"Truth Alone Wins"

Manipal **Sediyapu Krishna Bhatta**
1-1-1991

DISCOVERY OF FACTS

(*Aarya* – *Varṇa* – *Jaati* and *Liṅga*)

INTRODUCTORY

Once a poor boy went to dine in the house of a rich man of his own village. According to the customs, all the items, including sweets, except those to be eaten mixed with rice, such as soup, sambar, curds etc., were served in the beginning itself. As soon as the meal started after the religious preliminaries, the boy tasted the sweets and ate them in small quantities. One or two of the sweets he had not tasted till then and he liked them very much. Reserving them to be had at last, he took the other items including curds, and at last started eating the sweets. But since his stomach had become full by now he found it hard to consume them. Since hunger had been quenched the sweet dishes didn't appear as tasty as before. So he had to stop eating and go home with a saddened mind.

As the writer of the present book, I suffer from the same fate as that of the boy. Though the much discussed terms *Aarya, Varṇa, Jaati* and *Liṅga* especially the first of them had roused my curiosity about sixty years ago and were active inside my head, ambitious of writing a highly valuable article on them with utmost clarity, I began writing on some other subjects of my interest, reserving the present one for my concluding years. But when the other subjects were over, my writing capacity started diminishing because it was the declining part of my life. In addition, I lost the power of my eye sight.

Though disappointed thus, with the intention that the fruit of such serious thinking should not get totally lost, I have started presenting them, at least in a piecemeal manner, with the help of one or two affectionate youngsters in spite of my inability, because of my blindness, to present them in a systematic manner as I did in the case of my other writings. The only purpose of this work is that those interested in this line of thinking may find some guidance. Since the writing has to depend upon my weakened memory all my thoughts on the present matter may not become exhaustively manifest here. Only the sum and substance is presented. It is my bold prophecy that though the presentation here is imperfect, youngsters sincerely interested and having the necessary intellect and the steady application, either in the present or in the coming generation, are sure to achieve unprecedented success by following the path shown here. Also, I do pray to the One who directs the entire Universe that such a scholar emerge by Divine grace!

Chapter - I

AARYA - VARṆA - JAATI

"About 2000 years ago, an ethnic group inhabiting the Central Asia left its original habitat for diverse reasons, a section of it migrating to the west and another to the south; among those who came to the south -the region now known as Iran- many moved further towards the east, passed through the Khaiber, came to India and settled there. Their chief occupation being cattle-rearing, they went on moving to the places where food for their animals was easily available, and, in course of time, occupied the whole of the Northern India and made it their permanent residence. And they pushed the earlier inhabitants of this region to the south, enslaving many of them....." This is how it is narrated in the historical writings on our country, and is known to the educated mass; and the whole world today believes this as unquestionably true. According to this history, these people called themselves *Aaryas* (आर्य) and the aborigines *Dasyus.* (दस्यु) But the Greeks and the Romans who migrated westwards from the Asian continent and settled in Europe did not bear the name *Aarya*; none have so far cared to ask why the immigrants to India alone named themselves as *Aarya.* If the word *Aarya* denoted the name of a particular race, the section which settled in Europe also ought to have borne the same name. We cannot but doubt the general belief that the word *Aarya* was the name of a particular race.

It is quite recently that the word *Aarya* has come to mean a race, that is, in the nineteenth century; this term was used by the westerners who wrote the history of our country. Till then the word *Aarya* had, as we know, never been used in the sense

of a race. If it had been the name of a section of people occupying our country, we should have found it used in that sense in some work or other composed during three or four thousand years in the past. It would not be wrong to say that the meaning of the word *Aarya*, as found everywhere, is 'cultured'. To establish this point it is essential to know the origin of the word. This is the main object of the present work. For more than the last sixty years this thought has occupied my mind. As a result, I looked into various original writings of our country as well as the writings of modern scholars about our ancients, in the form of books and articles. Since I began this inquiry, I have been ever noticing that the history of our country as written by the westerners abounds in mistakes committed not only inadvertently but also deliberately with ulterior motives. Before I started reflecting more deeply on this, that is, in my boyhood itself, I had developed a suspicion that not everything found in the written history of our country was true. I should like to point out an incident here which aroused such suspicion: during the time of my primary education, a book entitled The Easy Lessons of Indian History was prescribed as a text for the III and IV Standards. The book had been printed at the Basel Mission Press of Mangalore and was, as I remember, the Kannada translation of the book written by one Marsden. The book contained many illustrations too. One of the illustrations was 'The Sun-obeisance of the *Aaryas*.' Two or three men (I do not remember the exact number) had been pictured as kneeling before the Sun with folded hands. Consequent on this, a doubt arose in my mind. Though I had not yet been initiated into religious performance my elder brother had already been. While observing the morning ritual he would utter the words "I perform the morning ritual", stand up and chant the relevant hymn. Not only he, but all those initiated in our large family used to perform the ritual in standing posture. None of them knelt on this occasion. But the picture in the text book contained the posture of kneeling at the time of the ritual.

Since then, every time I read a book of history, instead of simply swallowing what was said there I examined each and every word and accepted only what was found reliable.

The Brahmins, whom the historians hold to be representatives of *Aaryas* as far as rituals are concerned, while offering obeisance to Sun god, only stand, but never kneel. Therefore I could judge that the writer of the book dealing with the Aaryan ritual did not personally know the practice. Right from that moment, the view that the books on history should not be trusted without examination has taken deep root in me. It was thus that the seed of inquiry about the original meaning of the word *Aarya* was sown in my mind.

It is the unanimous conclusion of the historians that the ancient people now referred to as the *Aaryas* originally existed outside India. If so, why is there not even a slight reference to this immigration in our ancient works? Tradition has passed on from generation to generation the knowledge (memory) that our ancestors who came to the south about two thousand years ago and settled there had earlier been on the banks of the *Gaṅgaa* (गंगा) and the *Yamuna* in North India. And the words respectfully mentioning those regions where our forefathers lived are uttered even today towards the end of our daily ritual. It is natural for any people to look upon with respect the place where their ancestors lived. This being the fact, if the *Aaryas* had been the immigrants into India it would have been unnatural for them not to remember or respect their original abode. But no reference has yet been found to this effect in the works which, according to the historians themselves, were composed four or five thousand years ago. Nor is there any such reference in the works such as The *Raamaayaṇa* (रामायण) or the *Mahaabhaarata* (महाभारत) which belong to a later period. All the rivers and mountains mentioned in the Vedas are only within India. So it is certain that the Vedas were composed in India itself. The

contrary opinion of the historians that the ancestors of the Aaryas had composed them before they came here is not tenable. If the Vedas had been composed by the ancestors of the *Aaryas*, should they not have been known also to the immigrants to Europe in the past? The name *Aarya* as applicable to the race which once lived in Northern India is not found in any of the records. And there is no doubt whatsoever that it is only the western scholars who used the name *Aarya* in the sense of a race. Now let us make an attempt to ascertain the meaning of the words *Aarya* and *anaarya* (अनार्य) profusely used in our ancient literature.

It is found that though in our ancient works, the word *Aarya* means, without exception, 'civilized, cultivated, holy, respectable' etc.; the word is not confined to that meaning alone. In ancient days, Northern India was popularly known as *Aaryaavarta* (आर्यावर्त). Modern scholars have believed that the reason for naming the region so was the name of the race of the people occupying that region. But if we examine the statements occurring in the ancient works, it is clear that the word *Aarya* does not connote a race. The statements are:

आर्यावर्तः पुण्यभूमिर्मध्यं विन्ध्यहिमागयोः ।

aaryaavartaḥ puṇyabhuumirmadhyam vindhyahimaagayoḥ[1]

(Amarakośa, 2.1.9)

1 The borders of *Aaryaavarta* have been broadly mentioned in Manusmṛti (मनुस्मृति) thus:
आसमुद्रात्तु वै पूर्वादासमुद्राच्च पश्चिमात् ।
तयोरेवान्तरं गिर्योः (हिमवद्विन्ध्ययोः) आर्यावर्तं विदुर्बुधाः ।।
aasamudraattu vai puurvaadaasamudraacca paścimaat
tayorevaantaram giryoḥ (himavadvindhyayoḥ) aaryaavartam vidurbudhaaḥ

(Manusmṛti, 2.22)

सरस्वती दृषद्वत्योः देवनद्योर्यदन्तरम् ।
तं देवनिर्मितं देशं ब्रह्मावर्तं प्रचक्षते ।।

sarasvatii dṛṣadvatyordevanadyoryadantaram
tam devanirmitam deśam brahmaavartam pracakṣate

(Manusmṛti, 2.17)

The purport of these statements is: "The region between the Vindhyas and the Himalayas is named *Aaryaavarta.* The region between the *Sarasvatii* (सरस्वती) and the *Dṛṣadvatii* (दृषद्वती) is named *Brahmaavarta.*" All agree that the *Sarasvatii* and the *Dṛṣdvatii* were the rivers once flowing in Northern India. They have now dried up. It is said from ancient times that the *Sarasvatii* used to join the *Gaṅgaa* near *Prayaaga* (प्रयाग). Though there are only two rivers joining each other at *Prayaaga,* the confluence is known as "*Triveṇiisaṅgama* (त्रिवेणीसंगम) (the confluence of three currents) from times immemorial. It is beyond doubt that the reason for naming it so is that the *Sarasvatii* too used to join it. This explanation establishes that *Brahmaavarta* (ब्रह्मावर्त) was a part of *Aaryaavarta.* If *Aaryaavarta* is explained as the region occupied by the *Aaryas,* no explanation would suit *Brahmaavarta* on similar grounds. In the *Puraaṇa* (पुराण) literature, many regions are mentioned by the name *aavarta* (आवर्त). So it is in keeping with the tradition that *Aaryavarta* means "the region known as *Aarya.* It is found in Sanskrit and Tamil literatures that Northern India had the name *Aaryadeśa* (आर्यदेश). In Raajataraṅgiṇii (राजतरंगिणी), a historical work on Kashmir, composed by one Kalhana in the 12th century A.D., Northern India is named *Aaryadeśa.* In Silappatikaaram, a Tamil poem, said to belong to the early centuries of the Christian era, Northern India is mentioned simply as *Aarya.* But nowhere do the above two works make any reference to the inhabitants of Northern India as *Aaryas.* In Kannada also there are the examples of the word *Aarya* as referring to a region. In Bharateśavaibhava, a poem by Ratnakaravarṇi of the 16th century A.D., Northern India is named

Aaryakhaṇḍa (आर्यखण्ड). When all these evidences are considered, it is conclusively established that Northern India was traditionally known as *Aaryadeśa* from time immemorial.[2]

---

2 [सरस्वती दृषद्वत्योः देवनद्योर्यदन्तरम् ।
तं देवनिर्मितं देशं ब्रह्मावर्तं प्रचक्षते ।
'sarasvatii dṛṣadvatyoḥ devanadyoryadantaram
tam devanirmitam deśam brahmaavartam pracakṣate']

The meaning of this verse in the Manusmṛti is: The country which has been created by God and which is in between the rivers, the *Sarasvatii* and the *Dṛṣadvatii*, is called *Brahmaavarta"*. When the whole earth is formed (created) by God, why is this region alone called *devanirmitam* (created by God)? In answer to this question, the commentators on The Mansusmṛti say that to make it clear that that region is the holiest it is called *devanirmitam* (देवनिर्मितं) (created by God). None will doubt that since the word *deva*, in addition to meaning "God", also means "holy" the rivers *Sarasvatii* and *Dṛṣadvatii* have been qualified as *'devanadiis'* (देवनदी) (=divine rivers). When the whole of *Aaryaavarta* is known as *puṇyabhuumi* (पुण्यभूमि) why the mid-region between the *Sarasvatii* and the *Dṛṣadvatii* alone is referred to as being holy is worth-pondering over. The reason conceived by some is that the word *Brahma* (ब्रह्म) in the compound *Brahmaavarta* means "the *Braahmaṇas*" (ब्राह्मण); according to them, the place was called *Brahmaavarta* because it was occupied by the Brahmins. Would this not lead to the conclusion that the Brahmins lived in *Brahmaavarta* alone and that in all the other places of *Aaryaavarta*, which was known as *puṇyabhuumi* the people of the other three *varṇas* (वर्ण) lived? If it is conceded that people belonging to all the three *varṇas* lived separately in different regions, it is not possible even to imagine how that population, following the occupations according to the *varṇas*, could live. There must surely be other

It is clear that the word *Aarya* is the name of a region, not of a race. What then is the reason for this region to be known as *Aarya*? In Sanskrit there is the word *arya* (अर्य). No one would doubt the close relation between the words *arya* (अर्य) and *aarya* (आर्य). The word *arya*, according to the Sanskrit dictionaries, means 'trade'. Example:

इमां वाचं कल्याणीमावदानि जनेभ्यः ।
ब्रह्मराजन्याभ्यां शूद्रायचार्यायचारणाय ।।

imaam vaacam kalyaaṇiimaavadaani janebhyaḥ
brahmaraajanyaabhyaam śuudraayacaaryaayacaaraṇaaya[3]
(Yajurveda)

---

reasons why the rivers forming the borders of that region were called divine rivers, and the region was mentioned as God-made. The word *Brahma* means "big", "God", "the Brahmins". In addition, it means "the Veda" (वेद) also, as is well-known. The word *Braahmaṇa* originally meant "one who knew the Veda". *Brahmajñaanena braahmaṇaḥ* (ब्रह्मज्ञानेन ब्राह्मणः) is a statement in the *mantras* (मंत्र) of *Upanayana* (उपनयन) (initiation). It means: "one who has the knowledge of the Veda is a *Braahmaṇa*". [The Vedic literature is divided into three, namely, the *Samhitaa* (संहिता), the *Braahmaṇa* and the *Upaniṣad* (उपनिषद). The word *Braahmaṇa* here means "the explanation of the *mantra* portion". So *Brahma* in this context means "the *Veda samhitas*" (Vedic collections), as is clear.] For this reason, it will not be wrong to explain the word *Brahma* in the compound *Brahmaavarta* as "the Veda". Understood thus, the whole compound means "the Vedic region". That is, it was the region in which the Veda originated. This throws light on the problem why the region was mentioned as "God-made" and the rivers were called "divine". It is quite proper that the region was considered holy since the holiest Vedas originated there from the mouth of the seers.]

3 The compound word *"śuudraayacaaryaaya"* (शूद्रायचार्याय) should

"I speak these auspicious words to the people comprising of the four classes, namely the *Braahmaṇa* (ब्राह्मण), the *Kṣatriya* (क्षत्रिय), *Śuudra* (शूद्र) and the *Aarya.*" It is well-known that the ancient people of our country were classified as the *Braahmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas* and *Śuudras.* In the Vedic sentence quoted above it is clear from the context that the word *arya* occurring with the other three *-Braahmaṇas, Kṣatriyas and Śuudras* - is equivalent to *Vaiśya* (वैश्य).

Another example:

प्रियं मा कृणु देवेषु प्रियं राजसु मा कृणु ।
प्रियं सर्वस्य पश्यतः उतशूद्रे उतार्ये ।।

priyam maa kṛṇu deveṣu priyam raajasu maa kṛṇu
priyam sarvasya paśyatah utaśuudre utaarye

(Saamaveda)

The above hymn has not been rightly understood by modern scholars and they, taking the last part only and splitting the latter half of it as *uta + aarye* (उत + आर्ये), quote it in support of the point that the *śuudras* are not *Aaryas.* But here, if we split it as *uta + arya* (उत + अर्य), instead of *uta + aarya* (उत + आर्य), we arrive at the right meaning. And if we consider this hymn in full, we find the names of all the four varṇas occurring in this also, as in the previous one. To be explicit: here *raajasu* (राजसु) is equivalent to *kṣatriyeṣu* (क्षत्रियेषु) and *deveṣu* (देवेषु) to *braahmaṇeṣu* (ब्राह्मणेषु) [The word *deva* (देव) is not confined to

be split as *śuudraaya + ca + aryaaya* (शूद्राय + च + अर्याय). Some split it as *śuudraaya + ca + aaryaaya.* (शूद्राय + च + आर्याय) If it is split in this way, the earlier mentioned *Braahmaṇas* and *Kṣatriyas* by "*brahmaraajanyaabhyaam*" (ब्रह्मराजन्याभ्याम्) become "non-*aaryas*". So anyone will be able to note that this way of splitting is wrong.

'gods' only; it is widely used to mean 'a scholarly person' through its secondary senses of 'holy', 'knowing', 'superior' etc. The word *Braahmaṇa,* as explained in the line *brahmavid braahmaṇaḥ smṛtaḥ* (ब्रह्मविद ब्राह्मणः स्मृतः), means one who has understood the Veda.[4] The word *Brahma* within the compound *brahmavid* means *Veda.* In addition to this, *Brahma* may also mean 'knower', *Braahmaṇa* etc. In the earlier quotation from the *Yajurveda* also, the word *Brahma* means *Braahmaṇa.* For the above reasons, the appellation *deva* can justly be applied to *Braahmaṇa.*] Analysed thus, the above hymn means:

"(O God,) make me pleasing to the *Braahmaṇas;* make me pleasing to the *Kṣatriyas;* make me pleasing to all those who see me -be it a *Śuudra* or a *Vaiśya.*" These examples suffice to show that the word *arya* means *Vaiśya.*

It is quite clear that the word *aarya* is a derivation of *arya* (As *caandra* (चांद्र) is a derivation of *candra* (चंद्र), *Bhaarata* (भारत) is a derivation of *Bharata* (भरत), *maanuṣya* (मानुष्य) is a derivation of *manuṣya* (मनुष्य), so is *aarya* of *arya.*) According to all the early dictionaries, *arya* means *Vaiśya.* A woman belonging to *Vaiśyavarṇa* is mentioned as *aryaaṇii* in dictionaries. It is well-known that the widely known meaning of the word *aarya* throughout Sanskrit literature is 'cultured'. How did the word

4 A *mantra* recited on the occasion of *Upanayana* runs thus:

जन्मना जायते शूद्रः ।
कर्मणा जायते द्विजः ।।
वेदाध्ययनतो विप्रः ।
ब्रह्मज्ञानेन ब्राह्मणः ।।

janmanaa jaayate śuudraḥ
karmaṇaa jaayate dvijaḥ
vedaadhyayanato vipraḥ
brahmajñaanena braahmaṇaḥ.

denoting a *Vaiśya* come to mean 'cultured'? This is a matter worth investigating; and, in order to understand this point, we should stretch our imagination and speculate on the kind of life lived before the dawn of civilization.

All modern scholars have reached the conclusion that the early man lived by hunting. Forest is the necessary place for hunting. So it should be accepted that such men lived in forests or near forests. As time passed, they took to cattle-rearing. Therefore they discovered agriculture and formed villages. This is the unanimous opinion of modern thinkers. But it is beyond doubt that not all forest-dwellers did settle in villages. For even to-day (in our country itself) many live in forests. Thus it is quite acceptable that in an early period two classes, namely, the foresters and the villagers, came into existence. The foresters depended upon hunting from the hoary past. The villagers took to agriculture and cattle rearing for their livelihood, grew food products by labour, and became civilized by stages. As for the foresters, they did not change their life-style and remained as they had been. Thus people got clearly divided into two classes. Those who changed their life-style shunned violence and in course of time went on to become social. Those who remained in forests still continued to live a wild life. The main occupation of those who turned social by living in villages was agriculture. Linguists have discovered that the original meaning of the word *arya* was 'agriculturist'. The verbal root '*ṛ*', from which the word *arya* is derived, originally meant 'to split' or 'to scratch' or 'to injure (the ground)'. In Latin and Spanish which are the sisters of Sanskrit *arare* or *arar* means ploughing the ground. (The English word 'arable' also supports this meaning) Thus the plougher naturally came to be named *arya*.[5]

At present, a *Vaiśya* means one who engages himself in trade and commerce, not in agriculture. But there is evidence in Sanskrit literature that in ancient days, the main occupation of a *Vaiśya* was agriculture. Example:

कृषिगोरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्मस्वभावजम् ।

kṛṣigorakṣyavaaṇijyam vaiśyakarma svabhaavajam

5 It has already been mentioned that the word *aarya* is an expansion of *arya*. A point supporting this has been current in the local speech of our region; I am explaining here a fact which came to my notice in my boyhood. People in our village used to call a kind of he-buffalo used for ploughing, *aarya*. Out of curiosity, I asked my elders the reason for it; in reply I was told that the he-buffalo, which had lost its power of procreation as a result of castration was called *aarya*. Since I received only this inadaqute information, the propriety of calling it *aarya* remained unintelligible to me for a long time. But as soon as I came to know that an agriculturist was called *arya*, the secret of such a he-buffalo being called *aarya* struck me all of a sudden.

The he-buffalo, made sexually impotent in its tender age, becomes most useful for agriculture. It happens to be extremely tame and capable of hardship as compared with the other animals of its class. Further, it remains healthy and energetic even if fed on grass. For this reason, since it is most useful for an agriculturist, such a he-buffalo has the name *aarya* in the sense that it is the animal "that is most suited for the purpose of an agriculturist". (I have heard recently that even the grown-up animals, if castrated, are now-a-days called *aarya*.)

This explanation also establishes without doubt that the word *aarya* is an expansion of *arya*.

[The Tulu-English Dictionary compiled by Prof. M. Mariappa Bhat and Sri Shankara Kedilaya mentions that *aarye* means "the ox or he-buffalo which is castrated in its tender age."]

(Agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade are the natural occupations of a *Vaiśya*.) This is what the Bhagavadgiitaa clearly states. Agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade - all these three are the occupations of a *Vaiśya*. But as time passed, the *Vaiśya* class became wealthy, employed labourers, and became landlords; and this resulted in agriculture becoming the occupation of the servant class *(Śuudras)* [6]

6 In the dictionaries, the meaning of the word *arya* is given as *aryah svaamivaiśyayoḥ*. The purport of this statement is: *arya* means either "the master" or "a *Vaiśya*". What is the reason for the word which originally meant "plougher", to mean "master"? The answer is: when the agriculturist grew wealthy he began having the labour done by servants and became their master. When the words *dhani* and *okkalu*, which were current till very recently in our district (Dakshina Kannada), are probed into, the idea is further strengthened. It is known to all that in our villages *dhani* means "landlord" (not wealthy) and *okkalu* means "one who does farming in the master's land". This fact makes it clear how the word "arya" came to mean "master."
The *arya* who was originally an "agriculturist" became a "trader" (according to the current meaning) in this way: since the agriculturist sold the agricultural products to others and bought the agricultural necessities such as bullocks etc. from them, he became a trader. Since cattle-wealth was a necessity for agriculture, he had to undertake cattle maintenance also. For this reason, agriculture, cattle maintenance and trade-cum-commerce -all these three became the occupation of *arya*. Among the agriculturists those who confined themselves to mere trade and commerce and followed the occupation only of transporting the grains using animals became pure traders. Since some among such traders transported the grains to distant places for selling and became rich consequently, they required the assistance of many servants. Such traders came to be known as "masters" and those who worked under them became "servants". For this reason also the *arya* came to be called "master". When this explanation is taken into consideration, it is impossible not to realize how the word *arya* came to mean "master" in addition to "trader".

Even cattle-rearing did not suit the wealthy and it also ceased to be the occupation of the *Vaiśyas*. Since trade did not require physical labour, the wealthy *Vaiśyas* kept it for themselves and this caused the impression that the occupation of the *Vaiśya* was only trade while agriculture had originally been the occupation of that class.

The origin of the word *Vaiśya* is *viś* (विश्). The word *viśva* coming from the same origin means "all". In Sanskrit, a king is called *viśaampati* (विशांपति). The word means "the guardian of people". This shows that the word *Vaiśya* must have originally meant "people taken as a whole". The word *mahaajana* (महाजन), which means "the group of all human beings", had the meaning *Vaiśya*, as seen in the ancient Sanskrit works. This also supports the meaning which we have assumed here for the word *Vaiśya*. At a time when all the people of rural areas depended upon agriculture, it was natural for all of them to be named *Vaiśyas*. When the origin of the word *Vaiśya* is examined it becomes evident that the word as such does not give the meaning of "a trader". But as shown above, since the agriculturists who became wealthy took solely to trade the trading class alone came to be popularly termed *Vaiśyas*. In Sanskrit, the word for a trader is *vaṇik* (वणिक) and *vaaṇijya* (वाणिज्य) is the precise word for "trade".

Even western scholars agree on the point that the initial stage of civilization is agriculture. "Agriculture is the original culture", states a historian. From this point of view, it is not

surprising that the word *arya* meaning "agriculturist" led to the word *aarya* meaning "cultured" or "civilized". The man who lives in a village by agriculture, as against the one leading the life of a hunter in a forest, is definitely a cultured one. On account of this, an *arya* as well as the one who is cultured like *arya* deserves to be termed *aarya*. (The one who led a wild, hunting life was named *Dasyu*.) In the *Vedas* the names of the two human groups referred to respectively as *aarya* and *dasyu* occur together many times. For example, *vijaaniihi + aaryaan yeca dasyavaḥ* (विजानीहि + आर्यान् येच दस्यवः) (R.V. 1 - 51 - 8) etc.[7] [The western scholars have made use of such examples to support racial distinction- *aaryan* and "non-*aaryan*". But I believe that the above analysis will have made it clear that the word *aarya* does not indicate any race; it is only a reference to the man who, living by agriculture, is a cultured one.] The well-known meaning of

7 *vijaaniihyaaryaan yeca dasyavah* - this is the opening sentence of the 8th verse of the 51st hymn of the Ṛgveda. The meaning of this sentence is: know who are *aaryas* and who are *dasyus*. If *aarya* and *dasyu* were races this kind of preaching would not have been necessary. For, it would have been self-evident. Also, subsequently, in the 9th verse the words *aṇuvrata* (अणुव्रत) and *apavrata* (अपव्रत) are used as the synonyms of *aarya* and *dasyu* respectively. For this reason, no one who has observed the context will fail to understand that these words, instead of meaning races, actually mean the qualities and practices of people. This hymn has the purport of praying to Indra that he should bless them to be in company with the learned and the good, meaning *aaryas*. When this hymn is understood the fact that those who are named *aaryas* here are those with decent practices, and *dasyus* are those with the opposite character becomes clear. Therefore, the words *aarya* and *dasyu* as used here can never be race-names, as one without any doubt, will realize.

the word *dasyu* in Sanskrit is "robber" or "prone to violence". Never does it occur in the racial sense. *Dasyus* might contextually mean "foresters". Also, they are mentioned as *anaarya* meaning "uncultured" in Sanskrit literature. It is also found that in post-Vedic Sanskrit such uncultured tribes are termed *anaarya*. But nowhere such terms as "*anaarya* race", "*dasyu* race", *aarya* race" or *aarya* caste" are used.[8] If the word *aarya* is taken to

8 In Bharata's *Naaṭyaśaastra* (नाट्यशास्त्र) the (classical) Sanskrit is denoted *aaryabhaaṣaa* (आर्यभाषा). If the word is shorn of the context, it may mean "the language of those who are named *aaryas*. The word occurs in the context of assigning different languages to different dramatic characters:
अतिभाषा तु देवानां आर्यभाषा तु भूभुजाम्......
atibhaaṣaa tu devaanaam aaryabhaaṣaa tu bhuubhujaam.... This line means that the characters such as the divine being should speak the *atibhaaṣaa* and the characters such as kings should speak *aaryabhaaṣaa*. *Atibhaaṣaa* (अतिभाषा) means the Vedic language having the intonation of *udaatta* (उदात्त), *anudaatta* and *svarita* (स्वरित); *aaryabhaaṣaa* means the classical Sanskrit without such intonations. For details, one can consult Abhinavagupta's commentary on Naaṭyaśaastra. (In fact, *bhaaṣaa* means the "spoken language"; this fact is evidenced by Panini's aphorisms. Since classical Sanskrit was a spoken language in his time, wherever classical Sanskrit is intended he says only *bhaaṣaa*. While mentioning the Vedic language he says *bahulam chandasi* (बहुलं छन्दसि) (mostly in the Vedic) etc. *Chandas* (छन्दस्) is a synonym of "the Veda". *Chandaḥ padye ca vede ca* - Amarakośa. So the *aaryabhaaṣaa* mentioned in the Naaṭyaśaastra means "the language spoken by the cultured and the decent". If the word *aaryabhaaṣa* is made to mean "the language of those who are called *aaryas* the Vedic language referred to here as *atibhaaṣaa* would mean "the language of the *anaaryas*!!

mean a race, the Vedic statements like *kṛṇvanto viśvamaaryam* (कृण्वन्तो विश्वमार्यम्) do not make any sense. The above statement means "those who make the universe cultured". Is it possible to make the members of a race belong to another race? So there cannot be any difference of opinion regarding the fact that the statement means "those who make the universe cultured". Therefore it is evident that the word *aarya* was never applied to a race.

The word *aarya* has originated from *arya*. It has already been said that as the word *caandra* has been derived from the word *candra*, so is the word *aarya* from the word *arya*. When this is taken into account the basis for naming Northern India as *aaryadeśa*, *aaryaakhaṇḍa* and *aaryaavarta* becomes self-evident. To make it clearer: in the early days, the entire southern part of India was full of forests. The Northern part of India, excepting the Himalayan slopes, was an even plain. This fact is accepted by all. Northern India, because of the many rivers flowing there, was rich in water, and the land was fertile. In those days, no place so suitable to agriculture existed anywhere else in India or in any of its neighbouring countries. Nobody would doubt that it was a place quite convenient for cattle rearing since it was flat throughout, without forests. Since the place was very convenient for the foresters to become villagers, agriculture originated there. Excavations have shown the vestiges of grains

Bhaaṣaa means the spoken language; *atibhaaṣaa* means the language which is not generally spoken and which is above it. (The truth in the import of my words will find support from the fact that in the Hindi Monthly entitled Sarasvatii which was popular at the beginning of the present century the word *bhaaṣaa* itself was used to mean "Hindi". The late Mahaviraprasad Dvivedi, one of the architects of modern Hindi, was its editor.)

proving the fact that in the Punjab, in the Sindhu plains as well as in the *Gaṅgaa* plain agriculture was undertaken five or six thousand years ago. Thus the whole of the Northern India being agricultural, those who lived there came to be known as *aryas* meaning "agriculturists". It is natural that since it was the region connected with *aryas* it bore the Sanskrit name *aarya*. Since the rest of India was full of forests, Northern India alone, which was devoid of thick forests and offered ample opportunity for agriculture, came to be known as *aaryadeśa*, *aaryakhaṇḍa* and *aaryaavarta* or merely as *aarya* as in Tamil works. Since Kashmir was only a ridge of the Himalayas but not a plain, it was not, as mentioned by Kalhana, included in *Aaryaavarta*. Instead, he mentions that a king of Kashmir invited good Brahmins from *Aaryadeśa* to his kingdom and made them settle there. The purport is: as said in the Manusmṛti, only the vast plain in between the Vindhyas and the Himalayas was known as *Aaryaavarata*. It is natural that from the term *arya*, meaning people who settled in villages, pursued agriculture and maintained cattle for their livelihood without resorting to any violence as against the "*dasyus* who lived in forests" the word *aarya* meaning "cultured" got currency. An analogy may be drawn as follows: though the word "citizen" originally meant a "city dweller", the present popular meaning of the word happens to be "cultured", not just a city dweller. Similarly, though the original meaning of the word *aarya* was "one related to agriculture", the connotation has now changed into "cultured".

Do we not know that in Sanskrit a trader is referred to as *śreṣṭhin* (श्रेष्ठिन्) also? Even to-day in its derivation it is applied as a surname to a class people as *seṭṭi*, *śeṭṭi* or *seṭ*. (In some places the form *śreṣṭhi* itself is retained). Is it not surprising that neither the *Braahmaṇas* nor the *Kṣatriyas* who are considered superior to the *Vaiśyas* are named *śreṣṭhis* while the *Vaiśyas* alone are named so? The truth is: the word *arya* also means

"superior". So the name *śreṣṭhin* is reserved for *arya.* In Sanskrit, *Vaiśya* is also known as *saadhu* (साधु). It is not surprising that those who lived by agriculture and not by hunting like *dasyus* were named *aryas* and hence the word came to have the respected meaning such as "superior", "a good one" and "a great one" etc. As time changed, among those who lived by agriculture, some had to change their livelihood in order to protect the common mass from the onslaught of the *Dasyus.* They came to be known as *Kṣatriyas.* A group had to preach ethics and perform religious duties. Such ones were designated as the *Braahmaṇas.* Still the group, engaged in agriculture, cattle-maintenance and goods-exchange retained the name *arya.* So, the equivalent names such as *śreṣṭhin, saadhu* etc. remained reserved for that class, that is, the *Vaiśya* class. Only thus can we rightly understand why the words *śreṣṭhin, saadhu* and *mahaajana*" are applied to the *Vaiśyas* alone. It is natural that in any society the number of those who practise agriculture, cattle maintenance and goods-exchange happens to be very large, while that of those who protect the society, of those who perform religious duties or of those who do other services happens to be comparatively small. For this reason, the word *viś*, which means "the people collectively", became reserved for the majority engaged in the acts like agriculture. (Dictionaries mention the original meaning of the word *viś* as 'house'; *veśma* means 'house'. This word also is derived from *viś.* Since the word *viś*, from which *Vaiśya* is derived, gives the meaning "house", it is quite proper that those who built houses and lived therein came to have the same name. Since the *Dasyus* lived in the forest caves by hunting, robbery etc. the word *Dasyu*, originating from *das* (दस्) meaning "destroy", was appropriately applied to that group.) The meaning of the English word "people" is comparable with this: though the word "people" means "all human beings collectively", the word also means "commonalty" or "common people" who, without any specific profession, remain engaged in agricultural,

cattle-rearing and goods-transport activities, which are very essential for life. Similarly, the word *viś* means both "people at large" and "the specific group engaged in agriculture". The name *viśaampati* (king) is based on the former of the two meanings mentioned above. It should be noted that since the word *viś* was ambiguous because of its two connotations the word *Vaiśya* as derived from *viś* originated and got established in order to precisely indicate the particular group engaged in such activities. In short, as the word *caandra* originated in the sense of "relating to *candra*", so the word *aarya* originated meaning "relating to *arya*" and this caused Northern India to be named *aaryadeśa* in the sense of *"deśa* mainly occupied by *aaryas*". And as the meaning of the word *naagarika* (नागरिक) as "relating to city" has disappeared to-day, so has the meaning of the word *aarya* as "relating to arya". Since the *aryas* became "refined" as opposed to the *Dasyus* who remained uncivilized, *arya* came to mean "superior". The meaning of *aarya* got established in the sense "cultured", "social" and "respectable", the derivational suffix indicating the meaning "possessing the character of".

As explained above, though the word *aarya* had not meant a race till the 19th century, why did the scholars of our country accept it as soon as the western scholars stated that it was the name of a race that had come and settled in India? Further, why did they go on using that word in this sense which is nowhere found in the literature of our country? This must be thought over. To answer these questions, the Hindu society of the 19th century should be discussed in detail.

Our ancient works assert that originally the four *varṇas*, (the word *varṇa* will be explained in detail later.) namely, the *Braahmaṇa*, the *Kṣatriya*, the *Vaiśya*, and the *Śuudra* originated from the four types of occupations:

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।

caaturvaṇyam mayaa sṛṣṭam guṇakarmavibhaagaśaḥ
(Bhagavadgiitaa).[9]

---

9 A verse of *Puruṣasuukta* reads:
ब्राह्मणोस्य मुखमासीत् ।
बाहू राजन्यः कृतः ।
ऊरू तदस्य यद्वैश्यः ।
पद्भ्यां शूद्रो अजायत ।।
braahmaṇosya mukhamaasiit
baahuu raajanyah kṛtaḥ
uuruu tadasya yadvaiśyaḥ
padbhyaam śuudro ajaayata

It has become the habit of modern critics to argue with vehemence that the aaryas looked down upon the anaaryas as too mean, quoting the above verse which, according to them, is an evidence to show that in the Vedic society the position of the *suuudra* was miserably low. The reason for this conclusion of theirs is the misunderstanding of the fourth line of this verse. Their contention is that this verse suggests the wide social difference between the Brahmin and the *śuudra* as suggested by the statement that the Brahmin was born from the face while the *śuudra* from the feet. The reason for this mistaken notion lies in the word *ajaayata* (अजायत) (was born). The critics have not cared to note that in the line *braahmaṇosya mukhamaasiit* what has been mentioned is not that the Brahmin "was born" from the face. In the next line, *baahuu raajanya kṛtaḥ* also, it does not mean that the *kṣatriya* "was born" from the arms. In the third line also, *uuruu tadasya yadvaiśyaḥ*, the meaning is not that the *Vaiśya* was born from the thighs. Only in the case of the *śuudra* the word *ajaayata* meaning "was born" has been used. What is the reason for this expressional difference between the lines of the verse describing the system of the four *varṇas*? This has to be thought over and decided.

To know the meaning of this verse the verse immediately preceding it should be understood:
[यत्पुरुषं व्यदधुः ।
कतिधा व्यकल्पयन् ।।]
मुखं किमस्य कौ बाहू ।
कावूरू पादावुच्येते ।।
[yatpuruṣam vyadadhuḥ
katidhaa vyakalpayan]
mukham kimasya kau baahuu
kaavuuruu paadaavucyete

The meaning of the latter half of this verse is: "Which is the face of this Person? Which are the arms? Which are said to be his thighs and feet?" The previously mentioned verse comes in reply to these questions. So the answers should be understood as according to the questions themselves. Nowhere among the questions one sees the word meaning 'from which portion of the body of the Supreme Person are the different *varṇas* "born".' Instead, the import of the verse is: how are the different parts of the Supreme Person called? Accordingly, the statement *braahmaṇosya mukhamaasiit* means that the *Braahmaṇa* was the face of this Supreme Person; *baahuu raajanyaḥ kṛtaḥ* means that arms were the *kṣatriyas*; *uuruu tadasya yadvaiśyaḥ* means that the thighs of the Person were the *Vaiśya*. If the fourth line also is understood like the above three, its meaning will be "the feet were the *śuudra*". If the statement *padbhyaam śuudro ajaayata* is shorn of the context, the meaning will be that the *śuudra* was "born" from the feet. Any statement should be understood only as according to the context, not as a single statement taken separately. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that at the time of the composition of this verse this language was a spoken language. While speaking, we use words with reference to a particular context. In such cases, to understand the words at the level of denotation is wrong. Let us take an example: to mean

It is easy for the son to follow the father's occupation. It is convenient for the undivided families to make matrimonial alliance with the people of the same occupation. For this reason occupations got firmly established as hereditary and the convention that the father's *varṇa* itself is the son's *varṇa* took

---

that one has absolutely no money it is usual to say "I have not a single coin born in copper". (Copper is a metal. The coins of the least value used to be made of copper till recently.) If we take the phrase "coin born in copper" literally, the expression becomes meaningless. So here the word "born" should be taken to mean "made of". Similarly the statement, *padbhyaam śuudro ajaayata,* should be understood at the level of connotation that the feet of the Supreme Person were the *śuudra.*

Since the statement here is that the different parts of the Person became the different *varṇas,* we should not conclude that the hymn means that the four *varṇas* are inborn. In fact, the hymn is an allegory. In an allegory, the primary sense has no importance; instead, the suggested meaning is the intention of the composer. Here, the whole human population is conceived to be the body of the Person, and the organization of the society is made to correspond to His body. [The Veda is full of such allegories. For example, a verse of the Ṛgveda (found in the Muṇḍako-paniṣad also) runs thus:

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया
समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते ।
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्ति ।
अनश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति ।।

Dvaa suparṇaa sayuja sakhaayaa
samaanam vṛkṣam pariṣasvajaate
tayoranyaḥ pippalam svaadvatti
anaśnannanyo abhicaakaśiiti
(Ṛgveda, 1, 166-20)

root. Lastly, the four *varṇas* retained their separate identity regarding customs and observances; and the notion that they were four separate classes of distinctly separate origin got established. For this reason, the word *varṇa* itself went out of currency and the word *jaati* occupied its position. According to the ancient practice of the Hindus, the three classes, namely, the *Braahmaṇa,* the *Kṣatriya* and the *Vaiśya,* underwent the refining ceremonies like initiation, education etc. But the servant class was devoid of these opportunities; and, consequently, they led a life without refinement. But as said in the hymn previously quoted, by birth everyone is a *Śuudra* and only by acquiring education and culture does one become *Dvija* (द्विज) (twice-born). But when the concept of *varṇa* changed into a hereditary one and got substituted by the new concept of *jaati,* the earlier notion was forgotten and it came to be believed that the former three classes were hereditarily privileged for the ceremonies like initiation and learning the Vedas while the fourth class had not such privilege. This gave room to the universal belief that the *Śuudras* belonged to a race totally different from that of the other three classes. It was much later that the westerners set their foot on this soil. Towards the beginning of the 19th century, the whole of India came under the British rule and hundreds of English scholars held offices in this country. The westerners were accustomed to writing about the places wherever they went. Our ancients did not have the habit of systematically presenting facts. As for the western scholars, they had the curiosity of knowing and presenting the history of every country as based on the available evidences, but partly amplified with their own imagination!

From the very beginning, the westerners had developed a keen historical sense and so they recorded their history systematically. Along with the historical sense they also had a racial pride which made them interested in the racial origins of

different people. The western scholars who came to India learnt the different languages of this country, specially Sanskrit which was the main subject of the study of the native scholars in those days. Then they realized that most of the Indian languages (excepting some of the south) had evolved from Sanskrit. As a result of their study of Sanskrit they could understand the relation between Sanskrit and the European languages. Consequently, they came to the conclusion that at some point in the distant past the people of Europe and the people of India, specially of the North, might have originated from a common stock. Since the Vedas and the ancient Sanskrit works mention those who are virtuous and respectable as *aarya* and the demoralized and the uncivilized as *anaarya*, and since Northern India had the name of *Aaryaavarta*, they concluded that the early inhabitants of Northern India speaking Sanskrit had the racial name *aarya*, and that those who spoke Sanskrit and its derivatives were *aaryas*, and those who spoke other languages were *anaaryas*. Since the South Indian languages, though some of them have Sanskrit words and their derivatives in plenty, are clearly of a different origin, they concluded that the speakers of those languages were *anaaryas*. Since Tamil, which was least influenced by Sanskrit, was known as *Draaviḍabhsaṣaa*, and as Tamilnadu had the name *Draviḍadeśa*, and since the other languages of the south, namely, Kannada, Malayalam, Tulu and Telugu had close relation with Tamil, they named them "Dravidian Languages" (Rev. Caldwell who wrote A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages writes in the beginning of his treatise: "For the first time am I giving the name 'Dravidian' to these languages"). Since the speakers of these languages are found only in the south, they assumed that the ancient speakers of Sanskrit must have driven them to the south and named the inhabitants of the south who speak languages such as Tamil "Dravidians". Since all the main languages of the north of to-day are believed to have originated from Sanskrit and those who speak other languages than these

are supposed to be of a different race they concluded that the *Suudras* of the north were of Dravidian origin and that they must have been the slaves of the *Aaryas*. The western scholars systematically organised this material on these lines and constructed the history of India.

Having read the history of India constructed thus, the people of the upper classes, namely, the Brahmins, the *Kṣatriyas* and the *Vaiśyas*, came to feel that they and their rulers from Europe belonged to the same origin and that it was an honour for them to be so. Since they also incorporated the *Aarya-Draaviḍa* distinction in their writing, these ideas got firmly established.[10] But before the 19th century both in our country and outside the name *Dravidadeśa* was applied only to Tamilnadu and only Tamilians were called *Draaviḍas*. Neither the southerners collectively nor the *Śuudras* of the north had been mentioned as *Draaviḍas* till then. But, later, this imaginary *Aarya-Draaviḍa* distinction was taken to be real and took firm root. Subsequently this led to a racial hatred which had not existed till then.

The racial hatred which existed in the western countries had no place in our country. Nor did our people conceive any racial distinciton based on colour. If the four *varṇas*, namely, the *Braahmṇas*, the *Kṣatriyas*, the *Vaiśyas* and the *Śuudras*, had had colour as their distinguishing feature, there should have existed four colours causing class-distinction in our country. Have they ever existed? Or, were the classes decided according to colour at any time? Without answering these questions, it is

10 For example, see the portion of a Bengali song of Rabindranath Tagore, the world poet:
"*eśo aarjo eśo anaarjo*
eśo draabiḍa ciina"
- etc. *(aarjo = aarya; anaarjo = anaarya; draabiḍa = draaviḍa.)*

definitely wrong to say that the *varṇas* originated on the basis of complexion. (Since the four classes were named *varṇas* from the earliest time, some of our own countrymen were also deluded to believe that these were colour-based. For example, in a book written about snakes, the serpents have been classified into four: the white ones are the Brahmins, the red ones the *Kṣatriyas, the yellow ones the Vaiśyas* and the black ones the *Śuudras.*) If the *varṇas* such as the *Braahmaṇa* indicated colours, could the colours of *Kṛṣṇa* and Balaraama, sons of the same father, have been different? They were *Kṣatriyas.* On the basis of the classification of the serpents as said above, both of them should have been red. Our books say that *Balaraama* was fair complexioned and *Kṛṣṇa* was dark. Similarly, *Raama* was dark according to The Raamaayaṇa. Draupadii was also dark. Is there any doubt that these were all *Kṣatriyas?* If we organize *varṇas* according to colours, *Raama, Kṛṣṇa* and *Draupadii* fall into the *Śuudra* class and *Balaraama* should come under the Brahmin class. Therefore, the word *varṇa* in *caaturvarṇya* does not mean "colour", as we clearly understand. Though in Sanskrit *varṇa* means "colour" it has other meanings also. Among them one happens to be "name" (fame) (राजा प्रजारंजनलब्धवर्णः *raajaa prajaarañjanalabdhavarṇaḥ* - Raghuvaṃśa). If we consider the meaning of the names of the four classes, namely, the Brahmins etc. as based on occupation, the point becomes clear: *brahma* means *Veda.* The name *Braahmaṇa* means one associated with the Veda; that is, one engaged in the study of the Veda. The Buddhist references mention that the name *Kṣatriya* bears the meaning of "one who protects the field". The meaning of the word *Vaiśya* has already been conclusively discussed. Though the word *Śuudra* has not yet been satisfactorily explained, in all likelihood it must have meant "servant". For, since the names of the three other classes are based on respective occupations, we are compelled to believe that the fourth *Śuudra* also must

have been occupational.[11] In all our ancient works, the occupation of the *Śuudra* is mentioned as "service" (परिचर्यात्मकं कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम् । *paricaryaatmakam karma śuudrasyaapi svabhaavajam* - Bhagavadgiita). And in the *Smṛtis* it is said that the occupation of a *Śuudra* is to be of assistance to the occupation of the other three classes (specially that of the *Vaiśyas*). When all these facts are considered, the word *varṇa* in *caaturvarṇya* gets established as "name according to the occupation".[12]

It is not only easy for the son to follow the occupation of the father; but also such a practice improves the craft from generation to generation. Further, without dependence on any teacher, knowledge is acquired easily at home. We can observe this fact even to-day in our country. For example, the craft of a goldsmith, which requires extraordinary subtlety and skill, is learnt not from a teacher; by simple living with the father the son acquires efficiency. Anyone from outside the family of a goldsmith will take eight or ten years to learn the art. Even then it is doubtful whether he becomes a competent goldsmith. Since this is the case, in ancient days, everyone in our country pursued the occupation of his ancestors and the caste and the occupation became inseparable; *varṇa* came to be universally equated with the caste based on birth. (Investigation proves that even to-day the best musicians have acquired their uniqueness hereditarily.)

---

11 It has been said that the word *varṇa* is a derivative of the root *vṛ*. The meaning of this root is "to choose". It is clear from this that in the early times, the varna of one was identified as according to the occupation he "chose".

12 The classification of Brahmins as the *Draaviḍa braahmaṇas* and *Gauḍabraahmaṇas* has been in use for the last thousand years. The meaning of the words *Draaviḍa* and *Gauḍa* as used here is discussed in the Appendix to this chapter.

As the occupation came to be equated with caste, the "castes" which were only four in the beginning grew into hundreds in number, as we see to-day. For example, the potter, the oil presser, the weaver, the carpenter, the washerman, the barber etc. Do these people of various castes belong to different races? There is no doubt that people of the same race pursued different occupations from generation to generation, and this led to the multiplication of these castes. Similarly, though the four *varṇas* of the early days originated on the basis of occupation since the occupations became hereditary they came to be equated with "castes". Therefore the *varṇa*-distinction has not been the distinction based on colour. Doubtless it points to the occupation-distinction. It is quite reasonable to understand the meaning of the word *varṇa* in *caaturvarṇya* as "name indicating occupation".

It is said in some Jain works that "ploughing" is the occupation of the *śuudras.*[13] This has led some to think that agriculture is the occupation of *Śuudras* (Jainism accepts *caaturvarṇya*). The fact is that the wealthy *Vaisyas* who followed Jainism desisted from ploughing since giving pain to animals was against the law of non-violence. Hence they employed the *Śuudras* to do the labour. This should not lead us to conclude that agriculture was the occupation of the *Śuudras*. Since the *Śuudras* were meant to serve the other three *varṇas*, the *Śuudras* who served the Jains naturally took to ploughing. As a result, if

13 For example, see the following verse of Kaviraajamaarga *(a Kannada treatise).*
paradargaa paarvargaa-
ytarasargaa kuḍiyarappa naalvargaagaḷ
sthira goopaadhyaaya kṣmaa
paripaalya kṣeetrakarṣaṇaṅgaḷ kriyegaḷ
(Kaviraajamaargam, 1-65).

anyone belonging to any of the three upper *varṇas* ploughed the field, he was considered an outcaste. (As a matter of fact, according to the *varṇa* system, agriculture, cattle-rearing and even ploughing are the occupational duties of a *Vaiśya.*)

As argued above, when the *varṇa* system became established as caste system the pursuit of the occupation of one caste by another was discontinued; and it was thought that the pursuit of the occupation of one's caste alone was righteous. All believed that this had been the universal law from time immemorial. The convention of making an outcaste of the one who transgressed this law came into force. Owing to the fear of becoming an outcaste, all led their lives without transgressing the rule.

There is good evidence in our own district supporting the explanation given so far regarding the origin of castes which will lead us to conclude that people who formed a single community in the beginning got divided later into innumerable castes. Let us consider the details: Among the people of our district, three castes have a large number of members. These are the *Buṇṭs*, the *Billavas* and the *Mogeeras*. Among these, the *Buṇṭs*, have the name *okkaligas* also and they remained agriculturists till the last century (and the majority are so even to-day). Though the *Billavas* worked as agricultural helpers their actual occupation was tapping toddy from coconut and palmyra trees. Since they were regarded as untouchables, they were not allowed to enter the houses of the upper castes such as the Brahmins. They were even forbidden to draw water from the wells belonging to Brahmins. In spite of this wide distinction, traditional lore makes us realise that the *Buṇṭs* and the *Billavas* belong to the same origin. An old *Buṇṭa* gentleman well acquainted with tradition has said to me: "the *Billavas* and we were originally the children of the elder and the younger sisters"

The very names of these two castes explain the reason for their mutual separation:

As mentioned earlier, the *Buṇṭs* have the name *okkaligas* also. The word *okkaliga* means "agriculturist". It is evident that since they pursued agriculture they acquired that name. *Billava* (*Biruva* in Tulu) means one who has something to do with the 'bow'. By this we understand that the ancestors of the *Billavas* pursued the occupation of the bow, that is, hunting, (It is learnt that in some villages of Puttur Taluk of our district, the tradition of calling the billava *booṇṭegaara* (In Kannada, *beeṭegaara* = hunter) is prevalent. Some mistake *Baidya* for the corruption of *Vaidya.* But this is not right. This word is the transformation of the Sanskrit word *vyaadha.*[14] The *vyaadha* changed into *biyada* in old Kannada. Accordingly, that word got the form *bayide* > *baidye* in Tulu. *Vyaadha* means 'a hunter living in forests'; *Billava* or *biruve* also means the same. The *Kuḍiyas* of Kodagu (Coorg) exemplify that forest-dwellers not only hunted but also prepared toddy. When the *Billavas* who had been foresters earlier settled in villages, the occupation of tapping toddy from trees remained exclusively theirs. Since their ancestors were foresters they were regarded as inferior to the *Okkaligas.* If we analyse the statement that the *Okkaligas* and the *Billavas* were the children of the elder and the younger sisters, it becomes clear

14 It seems to be the illusion of our people that the name of a caste, when expressed in Sanskrit instead of a vernacular, makes the caste more respectable. Example: *kulaala, rajaka* etc. (*kulaala* means "potter"; *rajaka* means 'washerman') We remember that the associations of these castes are named *kulaalasaṅgha, rajakasaṅgha* etc. Only because of the illusion that *vyaadha* sounds more respectable than *biruve, baidye* derived from its Sanskrit equvalent, originated.)

that the two groups which later were separately named *Okkaligas* and *Billavas* had earlier lived together in forests and their occupation was hunting. Of that common tribe, those who left forests came to villages and took to agriculture were named *Okkaligas.* In the northern parts of our district the *Okkaligas* are known as the *Naaḍavas.* Those who remained in forests without getting down into villages remained *vyaadhas.* As time passed on and the population grew, deforestation increased, cultivable land got extended and life in the forest became impossible. Those who remained there still were also compelled to come to villages. Since they had by now been separated from the *Okkaligas* in conventional practices they were believed to be of a different caste altogether. Thus, the tribe which was originally forest dwelling got separated into the *Okkaligas* and the *Billavas* in course of time. It has been discussed in the early part of this work, how the two groups, namely, *Aaryas* and *Dasyus* originated, similar was the origin of these two groups. Since many *Okkaligas* took to soldiering, the caste came also to be known as *Buṇṭa* at a later stage. (*Buṇṭa* means *bhaṭa*, that is, "soldier".) It has already been said that some Buddhist works refer to the fact that among agriculturists some became *Ksatriyas,* to protect the fields. In our district also since the *Okkaligas* had to become soldiers they were designated as *Buṇṭs.* Since the name *Buṇṭa* connoted greater respect than the name *Okkaliga,* all the members of that caste called themselves *Buṇṭas.* The *Mogaviiras*, the third among the three major castes of Dakshina Kannada, were part of the same tribe in the earliest period, that is, before the origin of the names *Buṇṭa* and *Billava.* Since some belonging to the tribe took to fishing and continued it hereditarily a separate caste of theirs arose. As against the popular assumption, the fact that they were not originally a separate caste is strongly proved by the *baris* (*gootra* = pedigree traced back) which are common for the. *Mogaviiras*, the *Buṇṭas* and the *Billavas.* (The name *Mogaviira* has come into currency in the

present century. Its earlier form was *Mogeera* or *Muggera*. In the present century the name *Mogaviira* was fashioned to make it sound better.)

The above explanation regarding the origin of the various castes of our district and country establishes that there is no similarity between the meanings of the word "race" used by the Westerners and the word "caste" current in our country. If the facts are closely studied, we shall know that the racial discrimination has never existed among our people. The reason for the absence of this discrimination, which is common among the people of other countries, is the fact that in the remotest past, that is, before the dawn of civilization, people of various origins came and settled in this land. All those who settled in that manner felt that this was their homeland, got freely mixed with the other groups and became one single whole. It is no wonder that those who had not yet been civilized forgot from which regions their ancestors had come here. The reason for the immigration of people to this land and their settlement here is that unlike other regions, our country was very fertile, full of various fruit-bearing trees and animals and life here was quite pleasant. Since the people of various origins lived harmoniously, a special kind of population was formed here. This is the fact. Therefore, it is improper to distinguish the people of this country as the *Aaryas* and the *Anaaryas* or the *Draaviḍas*. It is impossible to say accurately from which part of the world which section of people came here and got mixed with others. Yet historians generally state that people rushed into this country from the Central Asia. Some others state that people from Africa migrated into the Southern part of our country. Still some others say that the people of South India are immigrants from the Mediterranean coast. No reliable evidence is available to accept these statements as true. Researchers say that when the skulls of the ancient skeletons got from excavations are examined no features of a

single race are found; instead, every skull seems to belong to a race of its own. Skulls of the same features have not been discovered in any excavation. So it is proper to conclude that in the remotest past, untraceable by human memory, people of many races got mixed here.

The reasons for the speculation on the part of the western historians that the ancestors of the present-day followers of the Vedic religion living in Northern India came from Central Asia are two: the first is their unshakable faith in the Bible when they wrote the history of India. The Christians of those days took the sta ements of the Bible to be literally true. As said in the Bible, Adam and Eve who were the victims of God's curse fell from Heaven to the earth near the Caucasus Mountain. The basis for the westerners' feeling that the origin of human beings was in Central Asia was their faith in this statement. Further, according to the Bible, the earth was created only five or six thousand years ago. Since these ideas had, with or without their conscious application, taken root in their mind it was impossible for them to take back the history to a period before that. This was the one reason for their conjecture that the people who had inhabited that region about two or three thousand B.C. should have migrated to different regions.

The second reason is the affinity they found between the European and the North Indian languages, specially Sanskrit. Since language is hereditary, it is generally believed that those who speak the same language belong to the same racial origin. Though the belief as such is not objectionable, it is hazardous to make the point where exactly the speakers of that langauge which is supposed to be the origin of both the European languages and Sanskrit lived. This would be only conjectural, never conclusive. The Vedas are the most ancient works not only in Sanskrit but in all the languages of the world. If they are studied open-mindedly and dispassionately, no one will say that they

are the compositions of a primitive people. It has already been established conclusively that the Vedas were composed in India itself, not in any other part of the world. Though there is controversy among the scholars regarding the time of the composition of the Vedas, the conclusion reached by Lokamanya Tilak, since it is based on the position of the stars and details of the *ayana* (half of the year according to the solar calendar of the Hindus) described in the Vedas, seems to be more reliable.[15] Tilak's conclusion is based on the clear evidence of Physics (astronomy). According to him, the date of the Vedas is the fifth millennium B.C. If the Vedas, which took shape undoubtedly in India, were composed six or seven thousand years ago, should their ancestors not have lived in this country before the civilization described therein? If at all they migrated either from Central Asia or from somewhere else, the time of the migration must have been at least eight or ten thousand years earlier. For, it is not mentioned in the Vedas where they had lived earlier. Only at an uncivilized stage man might forget his ancestral background. On the other hand, it is impossible for him to forget it after he has become highly advanced culturally and linguistically. (The present work has hinted at this point in the beginning itself.) So it should be admitted that if the composers

15 The division of six seasons in the Veda supports the view that the Vedas were originated in India itself. The seasons of our country are not uniform throughout, but differ according to regions. The six seasons in our religious calendar do not indicate the time system of South India. If we observe keenly, we realise that they are the seasonal divisions of North India. To be accurate, they are the seasons of North-West India. In that region, the six seasonal divisions as described in the Vedas, can be directly seen even now. Except in North India, nowhere else are these six seasonal divisions found.

of the Vedas had not the sense of their ancestors' habitat those ancestors must have come and settled in this country when they had been extremely uncivilized.

It is impossible to decide whether the ancestors of the people of South India, whom the Westerners call *Draaviḍas*, were the early inhabitants of this country or immigrants from elsewhere. Some historians say that these migrated from the neighbourhood of the Mediterranean Sea, occupied different regions, came to this country and settled here. Some others say that these came from the African continent. If either of these conclusions is true, the time of migration should be many thousand years ago. For, the people of this region do not have the awareness that their ancestors came from some other region. Since this is the case, nothing can be said conclusively about their migration. In essence, it is impossible to say with definiteness whether the ancestors of either the Northern or the Southern Indians, who have lived here for the last thousands of years, migrated from somewhere else, or have been the natives of this country.

It would not be entirely correct to trace the origin of a people through linguistic forms. For, when people speaking a particular language migrate to a place inhabited by the speakers of another language and both live together, the language of the minority gets influenced by that of the majority and gets transformed. Or, the minority accepts the language of the majority. If the minority language is more refined and richer in vocabulary, it is even possible for the minority language to influence the majority language; and the majority language may get transformed to a high degree. On close observation, we find that such phenomena occur even to-day. Since such changes occur even after languages are fully developed, it is impossible to say how linguistic changes were caused during the infancy of

languages. So it is improper to conclude that the speakers of the languages of the same features belong to the same origin.

As all of us know, the Bible says that all human beings were born of the first couple -Adam and Eve. (In the *Puraaṇas* of our country also, it is said that the humanity as a whole is the descendant of the couple, namely, *Manu* (मनु) and *Śataruupaa* (शतरूपा).)[16] The belief of the westerners that the origin of human

16 *Manu* and *Śataruupaa* described in our *Puraaṇas* are not, like Adam and Eve, a human couple. *Manu* means 'Man', that is, "Supreme Being"; *Śataruupaa* means *Prakṛti.* Here the Supreme Being and the Primordial Matter are only symbolic couple. The Manusmṛti gives the real meaning of the word *Manu* in the following stanza:

प्रशासितारं सर्वेषां अणीयांसमणोरपि ।
रुक्माभं स्वप्नधीगम्यं तं विद्यात् पुरुषंपरम् ।
एतमेकं वदन्त्यग्निं मनुमन्ये प्रजापतिम् ।
इन्द्रमेके परेप्राणमपरे ब्रह्म शाश्वतम् ।

praśaasitaaram sarveṣaam aṇiiyaamsamaṇorapi
rukmaabham svapnadhiigamyam tam vidyaat puruṣam param
etamekam vadantyagnim manumanyeprajaapatim
indrameke parepraaṇamapare brahma śaaśvatam

(Manusmṛti, 12-122, 123)

Of these verses, the former explains that *Puruṣa* means "soul". The latter mentions the different names of that *Puruṣa.* "This *Puruṣa* is named *Agni* by some, *Manu* by others, *Prajaapati* by some others, *Indra* and *Praaṇa* by some others still, and lastly Eternal *Brahman* by many others." Further, this description in the Manusmṛti tells us that *Manu* means "Supreme Being". *Śataruupaa* of the *Puraaṇas* means "one having diverse forms". The soul is conceived as of one form while the matter has infinite forms. (The spirit is of one form- matter of infinite forms.) These principles have been personified and stories are woven round

species was in Central Asia from where it spread to all parts of the world is based on this Biblical statement. Some of the western scientists have started saying that human species originated in Africa, as the examination of the more ancient skeletons got from the recent excavations testifies.[17] I sincerely feel that the conclusion that plant, animal, bird or human being originated in a particular spot on earth and spread itself from there throughout the world cannot be accepted. It is well known that science declares that origination of life depends upon the physical environment suitable for it. It is proper to think that life originated in all places where such environment existed. Isn't the origin of animals and plants also the result of specific physical environment? If that is the case, it is not proper to think that such environment existed only in a particular part of the world. It is more appropriate to believe that similar environments brought about the origin of similar species in different parts. For instance, science asserts that a single original matter, as a result of mysterious reactions during the time of the creation of the world, transformed itself into various substances. Various substances of the same form are available in different parts of the world. A metal (e.g. gold, diamond) is available not only in one spot on the earth but in different places. The causes for this phenomenon are the specific circumstanes occurring in those places which are suitable for that basic matter to multiply. Similarly, it is proper to believe that living beings of the same kind originated in different parts of the world owing to suitable environments. Would it be proper to say, on the contrary, that

them in the *Puraaṇas.* As for Adam and Eve of the Bible, they are real human couple. According to the Bible, the whole of humanity is the progeny of this couple.

17 An evidence which can show that this opinion is not correct, is given under the heading "New Light" at the end of this book.

from single pair of a species all the members of that species originated? Regarding the human species it would be proper to think that it originated wherever the environment suitable for it existed and that for this reason, people of different regions have different forms, colours etc. Why should the black people be only in Africa and not anywhere else? Why should all the Europeans be white alone? Why should there be the yellow people only in the Eastern Asia? Why should the red coloured people be born only in America? If all human beings were the progeny of a single couple, how could these variations be explained? It may be conceded that minor changes occur as caused by climate etc. But basing the argument only on this fact, if we can conclude that because all people migrated from one single spot of the human origin to different places all these changes of form, colour etc. occurred, the origin of human species goes as back as millions of years; the statement of the Bible that five or six thousand years ago the human species originated from a single couple becomes a meaningless assertion. Instead, it is quite reasonable to assume that the human species appeared wherever there were suitable environments, climate etc. The purport of the above analysis is: if the ancestors of the immigrants into Europe and of the North Indians of the Vedic period were of the same race, many who continued to live in the same original habitat should have migrated to Europe thousands of years later. Consequently, it is improper to think that, simultaneously, people of the same race migrated in two branches, one branch moving to the west and the other to the south.

It is not yet known with certainty to which people the ruins of Harappan civilization (got from the excavations of Harappa, Mohenjodaro, Lothal etc. which came to light in the middle of the present century in India) belong. Though many scholars of the world have attempted to read the script found in the earthen seals unearthed there, none of them have fully succee-

ded in it. Since those, who made such attempts, began with the presumption that it must belong to a particular native people the result of the work of each scholar differs from that of the other. Both the characters and the language found in the seals are unknown to them. If either had been known, the task would not have been so difficult. Among those who have attempted to solve the problem, S. R. Rao, who started without any assumption, compared them with similar other scripts of antiquity and so the results of his attempts are considerably reliable. Since the script resembles the Brahmi script employed in the Asokan inscriptions, he concludes that it must be the earlier form of that script; and, in his articles, he has explained and illustrated this point systematically. He has also shown that if the words are read according to this method they come very near the words of the ancient Prakrits of our country. The Prakrits of our country are the transformations of Sanskrit. Therefore, it has to be concluded that the Harappans and the Sanskrit-speakers must have been of the same origin. All the other researchers started with the preconceived notion that it must belong to a particular language of their presumption, and hence imposed the words of the assumed language on the seals and gave the opinion suitable to their own fancy. Their conclusions were not based on any reliable evidence. S. R. Rao's objective is to decide which language the words belong to when read after the characters have been identified, by comparing them with the other scripts which have been finalized after scientific investigation. The opinions based on his research are certainly more reliable than those of others.

Though S. R. Rao is of the opinion that the language of the seals is of Sanskrit class, he states that since the date of the seals is anterior to 3000 B.C. that language is the earlier form of Sanskrit. He hesitates to admit that it was born of Sanskrit. The most ancient works of Sanskrit are the Vedas. Rao neither questions nor rejects the opinion of the Westerners who state

that the Vedas are not anterior to 2000 B.C. as evidenced by the contents of them.

I am not convinced that the language of the Harappan seals is older than that of the Vedas. For, the words read by S.R. Rao closely resemble the words of the Prakrit languages. The pronunciation of the Prakrit languages is softer and looser than that of Sanskrit. Because the pronunciation of Sanskrit is harder than that of the Prakrit languages the latter came into being. None would coin words which are difficult to pronounce in place of the words pronounceable easily. Languages get transformed with the passage of time only as a result of the efforts to avoid difficult pronunciation. Since the Kannadigas found it difficult to pronounce many a Sanskrit word, the derivatives (*tadbhavas*) appeared in Kannada. (e.g. *pakṣi - pakki; Samskṛta - sakkada; mṛga - miga; Kṛṣṇa - kiṭṭa; upaadhyaaya - ooja.)* Not only in Kannada but also in the languages derived directly from Sanskrit such changes have occurred. e.g. *Kṛṣṇa - Kiśan* (Hindi); *Upaadhyaaya - oojhaa* (Hindi) etc. In English also such changes might be observed. e.g. the word which was previously pronounced as *knau* ('k' audible, 'au - ow') now-a-days is pronounced as 'no' ('k' silent, au = o) (Though the word retains the same spelling, pronunciation has changed.) When these facts are taken into consideration it is impossible to argue that the easily pronounceable Harappan language got transformed into the Vedic language which is difficult to pronounce. So it is proper to place the Harappan language chronologically after the Vedic language. Understood thus, the Vedic language becomes six or seven thousand years old. The date of the Vedas arrived at by Lokamanya Tilak on the evidence of the astronomical factors is also the same.[18]

18 Attempts to fix dates with the help of astronomical factors are not new. Kalhana of Kashmir has also tried to fix the date of the Mahabharata by these means.

Though Lokamany Tilak has placed the Vedas in the fifth millennium before Christ, the place of their origin, according to him, is not India but a region near the North Pole. (The reason for this conclusion of his is that he agrees with the Westerners on the point that *Aaryas* came to India in the third millennium.) But the present work has already adduced several reasons to show that the Vedas came into being only on the Indian soil. In addition, some further evidences can be given. Northern direction is referred to as *uttara* and *udiicii* in the Vedas. The derivational meaning of the word *uttara* is "of great height". (*udiicii* also means the same.) And south is referred to as *avaacii*. The origin of this word is *avaak*, which means "low". The region in which these words were coined must be high in the north and low in the south. If not, these words naming the directions would not have been so. Northern India is high in the north because of the Himalayan ranges and it becomes low as it slopes towards the south. So these names of the directions also support the fact that the Vedas originated in India itself and substantiate the opinion already expressed in the present work that the Vedas must have originated in the region in between the rivers *Saraswatii* and *Dṛṣadvatii*, that is, in *Brahmaavarta*.

It would not be irrelevant to say something more about the Vedas in the present context: The Vedas are four, namely, the Ṛgveda, the Yajurveda, the Saamaveda and the Atharvaveda, as popularly known. Since the Ṛgveda is mentioned first, conventionally it is thought of as the oldest among the four by modern scholars. No evidence is found for maintaining that the Vedas originated in this order successively. It may not be true that all the Vedic hymns appeared simultaneously. Tradition

holds that they were compiled into four books, namely, the Rgveda, the Yajurveda, the Saamaveda and the Atharvaveda much after they originated. The word *samhitaa* also supports the same view. *Samhitaa* means "collection" or "compilation". All the Sanskrit writings of antiquity state, without exception, that it was the great seer Vyasa who collected and arranged the Vedas into sections. The very name "Vedavyaasa" suggests this fact. When this is the fact, where is the means to decide which hymn originated earlier and which later? Where is the evidence to show that Vyaasa kept the same order as that of their origin? For these reasons, it is not sound to hold that the four Vedas appeared one after another.

Many people have another wrong notion about the Vedas. The Vedas are collectively referred to as *trayii* meaning a "triad". The three members of the group are- the *Ṛk,* the *Yajus* and the *Saama.* Many have the impression that *trayii* means only these three excluding the Atharvaveeda, and that *trayiidharma* means the practice according to the three Vedas only. As a result, the Atharvaveda is even condemned as of low status. But all of these ideas are the products of deluded minds. The reason for this delusion is the absence of the right knowledge of the meaning of the three names- *Ṛk, Yajus* and *Saama. Ṛk* means "verse", *Yajus* means "prose" and *Saama* means "song".[19] Because the Vedas are of these three kinds in form they are collectively referred to as "the *trayii*". (It might be remembered that the literature of any language could be only of these three kinds.) So *trayii* includes the Atharvaveda also. There is no reason to condemn it as worthless. The word *trayii* has originated in the sense of "the collection of verse, prose and song". Ignorant of

19 Though verses are not absent in the Yajurveda since prose is dominant in it it is named so.

this, not only the westerners but also the scholars of our own country got the impression that the Vedas came successively, one after the completion of another, and put the dates of the Yajus and Atharvaveda as later than that of the Ṛgveda. (But since large portion of the Saamaveda is formed with the hymns of the Ṛgveda they place these two at the same date.) As a matter of fact, all the four are compilations; it is not proper to think of them as chronologically successive writings. Though the hymns must have originated in different periods there is no evidence to prove which of them is earlier or later. But the so called philologists among the westerners have concluded that some of the Vedic hymns are earlier and some later. Even this view does not deserve acceptance. For, after comparing Sanskrit with the different languages of Europe they conceived a mother language for all of them. The hymns containing the words which are close to the words of that language are, according to them, earlier.[20] The later (classical) language is easier than the Vedic. On this fact, the modern scholars conclude that the Vedic language tended to become easier with the passing of time; they also conclude that the easily intelligible hymns are later than those which are hard to understand. Lastly, they conclude that the difficult hymns reflect the true Vedic society while the easy hymns present the picture of the post-Vedic society. This is how the fictitious history of the Vedic period is formed. Many writers, taking this material to be real, have written many 'histories' of

20 In the lectures delivered by me in 1950, under the auspices of Karnataka Research Centre, Dharwar, I have shown with evidence and examples that it is not proper to decide the anteriority and the posteriority of different languages based on the Westerners' 'derived-original-relation', which also is a product of their own imagination.

the Vedic period. The world at large believes that the contents of these books are facts. It is regrettable that even scholars of our own country have accepted the views of the Westerners without examining the truth of their statements. The reason why our historians do not understand the Vedas is that they do not learn Sanskrit well but get satisfied with the matter available in the books written in English about the Vedas.

The opinions of some others about the conditions of the Vedic society are funny. They say that the objects not mentioned in the Vedic hymns did not exist at that time and the absence of information about things is traced to their ignorance of it. Though it might be concluded that the composers of the hymns were familiar with the objects mentioned in the Vedas how correct is it to assume that the things or ideas not found in the hymns did not exist in those days? One scholar has concluded that the Vedic composers did not have the idea of "musical beats" (*taaḷa*) just because the hymns are not in accordance with the beats! As we all know, Basava, Allama, Akkamahadevi and such other Saiva mystics are the authors of a literary form known as the *vacana*. They did not put into writing any of them. How correct would it be to deduce that they were unable to "write"? How correct is it to say that since the whole of The Ramayana is in verse, Valmiki, its author, was unable to write prose? The present case is similar. If a specific subject is not found in an encyclopaedia it can be said that the compiler was ignorant of it. The Vedas were not meant to be an encyclopaedia containing information on everything known at that time. The Vedas are the repository of reflections about God, *dharma* etc. by the seers. But it is not a collection of all information, known to them. The hymns, which are of a very serious type, are not generally composed according to "beats". (Even to-day, it is the practice to recite them without "beats" even some are composed so.)

It is very hard to understand the real meaning of the Vedic expressions; it is almost impossible to understand certain portions of them. In the next chapter, I will try to elaborate the possible reasons for this difficulty.

* * * * *

APPENDIX - I

Draaviḍa-Gauḍa Distinction

The two classes of the Brahmins, namely, the *Gauḍa* and the *Draaviḍa*, are known by these names for about the last one thousand years. But, before the 19th century, the word *Draviḍa* meant only "Tamil"; the *Draviḍa* language meant only the language of Tamil; and the *Draaviḍas* meant only "Tamilians". When this was the case, how did some of the non-Tamilians also come to be known as *Draaviḍa Brahmins*?. None have tried to solve this problem. In my youth itself this problem haunted me, and, as a step towards solving it, I published a short article entitled "the *Draaviḍa-Gauḍavicaara"* (Reflections on the concepts of *Draaviḍa* and *Gauḍa*) in the literary issue of the Raastrabandhu Weekly (Kannada) in 1929. Though the matter I presented then is not disagreeable to me even to-day, since it was incomplete it continued to exercise my mind. As a result, I continued to reflcet on it quite often, and the outcome I am going to present here in a few words.

The Dravida Brahmins have some sub-classes within them according to their mothertongue. While mentioning them collectively the current expression "the five Draaviḍas" is used. Even in many Sanskrit dictionaries such as the one by Apte, the five Draavida Brahmins are mentioned as *Draviḍa* (Tamil), *Tailaṅga* (Telugu), *Karṇaaṭa, Mahaaraastra* and *Gurjara*. All those who belong to the classes mentioned here have been calling themselves *Draaviḍa Brahmins*. Interdining is the distinguishing factor of castes, and the five Dravida Brahmins interdine. The Brahmins other than the five of the Dravida group call themselves *Gauḍa Braahmaṇas;* these have five sub-classes, namely, *Gauḍa, Saarasvata, Kaanyakubja, Maithila* and *Vatkala*. None of these sub-classes, except the *Saarasvata*, are found in South India. All the four of them are the names exclusively applied to the Brahmins of North India. The *Gauḍasarasvatas* who are in South India also do not interdine with the five Dravida Brahmins. (The Sarasvatas are sub-classified under the names such as *Gauḍa-saarasvata, Kaashmiirisaarasvatas* etc.) Similarly among the Tamil

speaking Dravidas who come under the five Dravidas, there are Malayalam-speaking Brahmins also. Similarly, the Brahmins speaking Tulu fall into the class of the *Karnaaṭaka Brahmins*. Thus, though there are language-distinctions such as Malayalam and Tulu, they have fallen into the fold of Tamil and Kannada, the *Pañcadraaviḍa* being the general name for *Draaviḍa Brahmins*. From the language point of view, the mothertongues of the Maharashtra and Gurjara Brahmins and that of the Sarasvatas belonging to Gauḍa class are derived from Sanskrit and do not come into the class of the five Dravidian (the name has been current from the last century) languages. When this is the fact, it is worth discussing how the Maharashtra and Gurjara Brahmins came to be called the Dravida Brahmins.

No written evidence has been available to me to decide this point. Yet I should like to present here the outcome of my thinking for a long time and of my discussions with the elders in the field:

It is definite that the Dravida Brahmin and the Gauḍa Brahmin distinction is not very ancient. At the most, a thousand years might have elapsed since the origin of this distinction. So in order to understand the reasons for this distinction (however slippery they may be), if we are to get something at least, we should examine historically the changes that have occurred in the religious and social fields in the millennium prior to one thousand years of our recent past. In the first seven or eight hundred years from the beginning of that millennium, the three religions - namely- the Vedic, the Buddhist and the Jain - competed mutually causing great social change. As a result of the entrance of the Sakas and the Hunas into Northern India, many changes occurred in the political field also. Those foreigners settled here and, accepting any one of the religions, became the people of this country itself. Yet, though the Buddhists and the Jains accepted people into their religions without hesitation, the Vedic people did not do so, so freely. Moreover, as a result of the fact that since many of the kings also embraced Buddhism or Jainism and encouraged the religion which they embraced, the Vedic religion lost the status which it had earlier and the followers of it had to leave North India and migrate to the south. Only in the eastern part of North India, that is, in the regions which are now known as Bihar and Bengal, the Brahmins commanded

respect, perhaps because the Guptas who belonged to the Vedic religion ruled the city known as *Gauḍa*. And the whole region was called the *Gauḍadeśa*. [The word *guḍa* (jaggery) is the origin of *Gauḍa*. It is because jaggery was produced there in large quantity and because it was the centre of jaggery-trade that the name originated. The region named *Gauḍa* was also called *Pauṇḍrakadeśa*. The word *Pauṇḍraka* is used in the sense of a variety of sugarcane in the Ayurvedic works. (*Puṇḍra* means the line put on the forehead; if the meanings of the words such as *tripuṇḍra*, *uurdhvapuṇḍra* are examined, it becomes clear that *Pauṇḍrakekṣu* means sugarcane possessing the lines. In Sanskrit it is also called *Puṇḍrekṣu*). It may be seen that whenever the mention of sugarcane juice is made the word *pauṇḍrakekṣu* is profusely used. The name *pauṇḍrakadeśa* originated in the sense that it was the region in which the lined sugarcane grew amply and the word *Gauḍadeśa* originated in the sense that it was the region in which jaggery was produced in plenty.] The Brahmins coming out of Kanyakubja (Kanauj) and such other places, found refuge in the Gauḍadeśa. Among the Brahmins who lived near River Sarasvati, some migrated to Gauḍadeśa and some others to Kashmir. Some among these rested for some time in the region called *Kuśasthala* and then, coming to South India, came to the region now known as "Goa" and settled there. The place in Goa where they settled was later also called *Kuśasthala*. All the Brahmins who migrated from the banks of River Sarasvatii came to be known as *Saarasvatas*. Some among the *Sarasvatas* settled in *Gauḍadeśa*. For reasons unknown, some among them left *Gauḍadeśa*, came to south India and settled in the place where the *Kuśasthaliyas* had settled. Since these were the *Sarasvatas* who had come from *Gauḍadeśa*, they were called the *Gauḍa-saarasvatas*.

Since the rulers of South India at that time were also the followers of the Vedic religion, the Brahmins commanded both honour and respect there. So the migration from North India to the south was continuous and uninterrupted. The rulers of the three subdivisions of *Draavidadeśa*, namely, Coola, Pandya and Cera, had special respect for Vedic religion. Though the Buddhists and the Jains had come to the south to spread their religion in large numbers and had lived there, since the rulers were the followers of Vedic religion the Brahmins did

not lose their position there. (The Pandya kings were the performers of many sacrifices, as known from the Raghuvamśa of Kalidasa. For this reason, a large population of the Brahmins settled in the *Draavidadeśa)* [21]

21 During the time of the Pallava Kings, the city of Kanchi was a major centre of the Brahmins. A Brahmin youth of that place, Mayuuraśarma by name, practised wrestling etc. and had the nature of the Kṣatriyas. Later, for reasons unknown, he left Kanci, came to Karnataka, and in the place now known as Banavasi founded a kingdom. And since he had the nature of the Kṣatriyas, he discarded the surname *śarma*, which was of the Brahmins, and took the kṣatriya surname *varma*. This Mayuuravarma was the originator of the Kadamba dynasty. Since there was a dearth of Brahmins who could perform sacrifices in that region and since he had come from the Dravidadeśa discarding *Braahmaṇatva* he persuaded the Brahmins who had settled in North India to come to his place. Since those Brahmins had come from *Ahicchatra* they came to be known as *Ahicchatra Brahmins*. This lengthy name got shortened in spoken language and contracted into *Ahika Brahmin*. (The late Kadava Sambhu Sharma, who had gone through a Sanskrit book entitled *Braahmaṇotpattimaartaaṇḍa* (ब्राह्मणोत्पत्तिमार्ताण्ड) written by a Gauḍa Brahmin of Goa four or five centuries ago, has informed me that the name *Ahicchatra Brahmin* itself is found in it. The late Sharma was a Vedanta Siromani in Sanskrit, was a *Vidwan* in Kannada, and worked as Pandit in Board High School, Puttur.) The word *Ahika* has been further transformed and is current as *Havika* to-day. Quite recently some have made it *Havyaka*. Regarding this name I have had threadbare discussions with many elders including *Maṭhaadhipatis* and have ascertained the fact that the name *Havyaka* is of quite recent origin, that is, of this century. The transformation is similar to that of the word *Mugera* or *Muggera*, which once was the name of a particular caste, changing into *Mogaviira* as it is current to-day. (The conclusion that the word *Ahika* comes from *Naaga* (serpent) origin affirmed by the late Govinda Pai is certainly far from true. His contention is that the present district of Uttara Kannada was the settlement of the tribe known as the *Naagas*. The reason he adduces is the story of Naagaananda (a drama is Sanskrit). The story that Jiimuuta-vaahana, hero of Naagaananda, offered himself as food

As time passed, Jainism spread widely in South India.[22] The Jains, unlike the Vedic people, did not write their scriptures in Sanskrit. They wrote them in the vernacular languages. It was Jains who began writing in Kannada and Tamil. (It is known that among the early writings of Tamilians, the Buddhistic ones are also there. As a result, the common people who did not know Sanskrit came into contact with the Jain practices, knew that the main characteristics of that religion were non-violence and abstinence from meat, and greatly respected the Jain monks who followed discipline strictly. Since respect for the Brahmins who did not taboo meat eating, was diminished, and since the Brahmins also began to appreciate the non-violent path of the Jains, they also gave up meat eating. For this reason in South India all the Brahmins became vegetarians.

As said above, since among the Brahmins who migrated to South India many settled in the *Draavidadeśa,* gave up meat and became vegetarians, the Brahmins of *Draavidadeśa* came to have a culture which was different from that of those in the North. The culture which was at first confined to the Dravida Brahmins spread into the regions of Karnataka, Andhra, Maharashtra and Gurjara where Jainism had its sway and made the Brahmins of those regions also vegetarians. As a result of the fact that the Brahmins of Karnataka etc. accepted the culture of the *Draavidadeśa* the name *Draaviḍa Braahmaṇas* (the

for Garuḍa in Gokarna is one among the stories in Bṛhatkathaa of Guṇaḍhya, a Prakrit poet. There is no doubt that all the stories in it are fables and historical truth, if any, is very little in them. If history is based on such stories, it will be as little valid as the stories themselves.)

22 Though both Buddhism and Jainism originating in the North have had non-violence as their chief characteristic, Buddhism which was not as vigorous a system as Jainism, did not spread so widely as Jainism there. So it may be inferred that the Monks who came to South India to preach religion were mostly Jains. (Though Buddhism was also familiar in the south from the time of Asoka, the Buddhist monks could not influence the people so much as the Jain monks who were noted for their vigorous penance. For this reason, it seems that Buddhism did not command the respect that Jainism did in South India.)

followers of the practices of the *Draviḍa Brahmins)* - in order to distinguish them from the Brahmins who still continued to observe the previous practices and did not give up meat eating - took root. Thus the expression 'the five *Draviḍas*' came to be used.

As mentioned earlier, a big group of the Brahmins had migrated from North India to Eastern India and had settled in the Gauḍadeśa. They were used to fish-eating or meat-eating and were distinguishable from the five Dravidas in practices, specially in the case of food. Since the majority of them lived in the Gauḍadeśa, the Brahmins of Kanyakubja etc. who followed their practices also came to be called *Gauḍa Braahmaṇas.* The Brahmins of Andhra, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gurjara were called *Draaviḍa Braahmaṇas.* I do not have the least doubt that the distinction, namely, the *Draaviḍa Braahmaṇas* and the *Gauḍa Braahmaṇas* arose in this way.

[There is absolutely no connection between the word *Gauḍa* in *Gauḍa Braahmaṇa* and the *Gauḍa* used as the surname of some - mainly of the *Okkaligas* - in Karnataka. This surname was *gaamuṇḍa* or *gaavuṇḍa* in old Kannada. The word is still current in the form of *gauṇḍa* in Tulu. As a respectable '*Okkaliga*' is called *gauḍaru* in Kannada, so is he called *gauṇḍar* in Tamil. Thus among the linguistic forms established in these three languages, the oldest form is *gaamuṇḍa.* It is known that in Northern Karnataka the word *gauḍa* means the chief of a village. So it may be concluded with certainty that the origin of the word *gaamuṇḍa* must be in the word *graama* of Sanskrit. It has been already explained that the word *gauḍa* in *Gauḍa Brahmin* is the name of a region. Thus the word *gauḍa* which goes with the word *braahmaṇa* and the other word with the same spelling and pronunciation used as the surname of some are of two different origins and mean two different things.

Though in the above article, regarding the two words, *gauḍa* and *draaviḍa* which appear as the two classes of Brahmins, the derivation of the word *Gauḍa* has been mentioned with finality, not much has been said about the word *draaviḍa.* As far as my investigation goes, none have satisfactorily explained the derivation of the word *draaviḍa.* Some Tamil admirers hold that the word *Tamiḷ* became *draviḍa* in Sanskrit. In their opinion, *draviḍa* is a derivation from

Tamiḻ. But derivatives originate when the words of other languages which are difficult to pronounce are borrowed. The reason for this is the difference in forms of the syllables and the syllable-combinations of those two languages. No reason could be adduced to the supposition that the first syllable of the word *Tamiḻ* changed into *dra* when the word was used in Sanskrit. Then, is it possible that *Tamiḻ* itself is derived from Sanskrit? This must be considered, as it is not impossible. For, as in Sanskrit, Tamil cannot have the conjunct consonant *dra*. Further, it is not possible for Tamil to have the consonant *d* in the beginning of a word. If words are borrowed from other languages with the initial *d* sound, The intial *d* changes into *t* in Tamil. For these two unexceptional reasons, to say that the initial Sanskrit *d* changed into Tamil *t* is quite consistent with Dravidian linguistics. If we follow this rule, *Tamiḻ* appears to have been derived from Sanskrit word *draviḍa*. But the point to be debated here is, since the sound *ḻ* in *Tamiḻ* does not exist in Sanskrit, and since the sounds *v* and *d* do exist in Tamil, whether the word *draviḍa*, coming from Sanskrit to Tamil, should have been *taviḍa*. So it is necessary to elaborately discuss the sound *d* in Sanskrit.

Though the sound *ḷ* does not exist in classical literary Sanskrit, it exists in the Vedic language. Example:

अग्निमीळे पुरोहितम्

agnimiiḷe purohitam (Rgveda 1.1.1.)

etc. This *ḷ* of the Vedas has changed into *d* in later Sanskrit. Example:

सानुजं राममीडे

saanujam raamamiiḍe

Also the Vedic *ḷ* changes into *ḍ* when it is a conjunct. Example:

अग्निः पूर्वेभिः ऋषिभिरीड्यः

agnih puurvebhiḥ ṛṣibhiriiḍyaḥ (Rgveda 1.1.2.)

Both the word *iiḷe* and the word *iiḍya* are the forms of the root *iiḷa stutau*. In classical Sanskrit there are many cases of *ḍ* changing into *ḷ*. Example:

भुजलतां जलतामबलाजनः

bhujalataam jalataamabalaajanaḥ (Raghuvamśa 9.46)

Here Kalidasa has used the word *jalataam* instead of *jaḍataam*. For this reason, Sanskrit commentators often state that *ḍ* and *l* are interchangeable *(ḍalayorabhedaḥ)* (डलयोरभेदः). Sanskrit *l* can be pronounced as *ḷ* also. There are innumerable instances of this phenomenon in the literature of old Kannada. Thus the sound which alternately becomes *ḷ* or *l* (which is *ḷ* originally) is named by the Kannada grammarians as *kṣaḷa*. The sound *ḻ* which still exists in Tamil and existed in old Kannada, has become the natural *ḷ (kuḷa* according to the Kannada grammar) for the last thousand years. When all these cases of sound changes are considered, it is not impossible that *taviḍa* becomes *taviḻa* [The Sanskrit *ḍ* (ड) has changed into *ḷ* (ळ) *(kuḷa* mostly in Southern India. For instance, the *raaga* known as *varaaḍii* (वराडी (Giita Govinda) in Sanskrit has become *varaaḷi* (वराळि) in Kannada. The word *gauḍa* in *Maayaamaaḷavagauḷa* (मायामाळवगौळ), *Riitigauḷa* (रीतिगौळ), *Kedaaragauḷa* (केदारगौळ) etc. is the changed form of *gauḍa* in Sanskrit. To name the *raagas* (राग) after the region in which they originated is a characteristic of our musical tradition. This fact becomes clearer if we consider the names *kaanaḍa* (कानड) (Kannada) and *gauḍamalhaara* (गौडमल्हार) of Hindustani music, and the names *sauraaṣṭra*, (सौराष्ट्र) and *śuddhabaṅgaaḷa* (शुद्धबंगाळ) etc. of Karnatic music. This *gauḷa* is the changed form of Sanskrit *gauḍa*] Cases of interchangeability of the sounds *v* and *m* are many in Dravidian languages. Example: *taavare - taamare, aame-aave* etc. The sound *v* in the word *draviḍa* (द्रविड) has changed and the words *dramila* (द्रमिल), *dramiḷa* (द्रमिळ) and *dramiḍa* (द्रमिड) appear in some books. The fact that *v* is often pronounced as a nasal is approved by grammars. Because of this factor, the word *draviḍa* became *drav*(nasal)*iḍa* द्रविंड) and later *dramiḷa* (द्रमिळ). For all these reasons, it is quite possible that *draviḍa* may become *tamiḻa*. Still, why *ḍ* here has not changed into *ḷ (kuḷa)* but has become *ḻ (ṛaḷa)* is a moot point. To answer this question we have to examine the way in which *ḍ* is pronounced in North India. It has also to be inferred how the pronunciation of *ḷ* changed into *ḍ* in the conjunct consonant of the Vedic language. Let us take Hindi as an example. In the words of this language the sound *ḍ* is pronounced as pure *ḍ* only in the cases of its being in the beginning of a word. In other cases *ḍ* resembles the pronunciation of *ḻ (ṛaḷa)*. To show this special pronunciation a dot is put under that *ḍ*. (ड़) If we listen keenly

to the pronunciation of *guḍa, gauḍa* etc. of those whose mothertongue is Hindi, this speciality becomes clear. The pronunciation of *ḷ* in the Vedic language which belongs to the period in which Sanskrit was a spoken language cannot be clearly decided. For, Sanskrit later not only lost that *ḷ* but also changed from a spoken language into a purely written language. Perhaps, the Vedic *ḷ* was pronounced like the Hindi *ḍ* (ड़) occurring in the places other than the beginning of a word. The ancient grammarians of Kannada are of the opinion that *ḻ (ṟaḻa)* originates from *ḍ*. Example: *laraḍagrahaṇade ḷaṟaḻaakṣaramakkum* (Śabdasmṛti). (It is not rare that *ḍ* in the Sanskrit words changes into *ḻ* in the derived borrowals of old Kannada. So it is proper to hold that *ḍ* in the word *draviḍa* changed itno *ḻ (ṟaḻa);* its *v* into *m* and thus the form *tamiḻa* > *tamiḻ* came into use.

Though it was elaborately explained above that the word *tamiḻa-tamiḻ* is the transformed form of *draviḍa*, we have not still explained the origin of *draviḍa*. No attempt worth mentioning has been made in this direction.

The derivation of the Sanskrit word *draviḍa* can be explained in this way: when the secondary suffix *ila* (इल) is added to the noun-base *dru*, (द्रु) the word *dravila* (द्रविल) is obtained, according to the rules of Sanskrit grammar. The base *dru* means "forest" or "tree". When the suffix *ila* is added to the name of an object, it means "that which is full of it". The word *phenila* (फेनिल) derived in this way means "that which is full of foam". When this is so, the word *dravila*, which is derived in the same way as *phenila*, means "that which is full of forest" or "that which is full of trees" *ḍa* being substituted for *la* according to the rule that *la* and *ḍa* are interchangeable, the word *draviḍa* is obtained. If the inference is correct, the word *draviḍadeśa* means "the region full of trees". In ancient days, Southern India being full of forests, it would not have been improper to call it *draviḍadeśa* totally; but the name *draviḍadeśa* was current as applicable to the southernmost point; that is, only to Kerala and Tamilnadu. The reason for this is that in Southern India only this portion was thickly populated in those days. And, historically also, this seems to have been the fact. (Even to-day that portion is more thickly populated than the other portions of Southern India.) Since the population was not so thick in

other places that portion alone was called *draviḍadeśa*, as could be inferred. For to name a region as a *deśa* there must be sufficient population. The other portions of South India, namely, Andhra, Karnataka etc. in which the population was thin in the most ancient days must have been named *deśa* as in later periods, as they also came to be populated.[23]

This is also supported by Raghuvamśa. In the victory march of the king from Ayodhya to the east, there is no mention of Magadha, but only the countries such as *Suhma*, *Vaṅga* etc., which are in the North-east, are mentioned. From there, the march proceeds towards the south and reaches Kalinga. From this it may be inferred that Kalidasa did not like to state that Raghu defeated the king of Magadha.

---

23 These words of mine are not baseless speculation. It is well-known that in Kalidasa's 'Raghuvamśa' there is a description of king Raghu's victory-march. We find a vivid description of how his march went on systematically throughout India. Among the names of the southern countries after Utkala (Kalinga) only Pandya is mentioned there. Though the poet says that proceeding from there Raghu marched through the west coast of South India towards the North no name except *Aparaanta* among the coastal ones is mentioned. In another context in the same epic - in the description of the *Svayamvara* of Indumati, the Vidarbha Princess, - diverse names of the countries and the kings of India are given. There also the description of only the Pandyan king and of his country is found. Apart from this, neither the name of any country to the south of Vidarbha nor that of any king of the place is mentioned. The possible inference from this is that during the time of Kalidasa the famous kings to the south of Vidarbha were the Pandyans alone (except those of Aparanta, a small place on the West Coast. Kalidasa's time hasn't yet been decided with any certainity; and it is made to oscillate between the 1st century B.C. and the 6th century A.D. by researchers. There is no doubt regarding the fact that he lived during the heyday of the Magadha Kingdom. (But since the Magadha Kingdom was powerful for about a thousand years beginning with the c. 6th B.C., it cannot be said with certitude during which period of this kingdom Kalidasa lived.)

Further, among the kings who attended the *Svayamvara* ceremony of Indumati the King of Magadha is also one, he, unlike the other princes, is not rejected by the Princess. She respectfully bows to him and moves ahead. This reveals the respect Kalidasa had for the king of Magadha. It is also possible that he might have been patronized by him. There is clear evidence in his Meghaduuta that he was a resident of Ujjaini. But the capital of Magadha was Pataliputra, not Ujjaini. It is known from the writings of Asoka, Agnimitra and others that the kings of Magadha used to appoint their sons s representatives in the cities of Takşasila, Ujjaini or Vidiśa etc. since the kingdom was too vast. So it may be inferred that Kalidasa was patronized by some such prince. Therefore I humbly conclude that the period in which the Pandyas were dominant in the south and a Magadha prince settled in Ujjaini was the period of Kalidasa.There is another factor in Raghuvamśa which helps us to decide the date of Kalidasa. Raghu defeats the Pandyas, proceeds along the west coast, defeats the king of Aparaanta (The region of the west coast comprising Karvar, Goa and Ratnagiri was known as Aparaanta in ancient days), goes by land itself northwards and attacks the Yavana country. There he defeats the Yavanas, that is, the Persians. [Modern historians state that *Yavana* at first meant the Greeks and that it is a transformation of the word *Ionian*. The evidence they give is the word *Yoṇa*, a Prakrit word found in an inscription of Asoka. Though it may be conceded that *Yoṇa* is a derivative of *Ionian*, I do not think its reference is exclusively to the Greeks. If it were the name of the Greeks alone, what might be the reason for Kalidasa, who is not a moderner to refer to the Persians as *Yavanas*? If we study our ancient works, we come to know that all those who were to the west of India were referred to as *Yavanas*. I have heard that according to the Vaayupuraaṇa those who are in the west are *yavanas* and that those who are in the east are *mlecchas*. The word *mlicchati* in Sanskrit means 'speaks indistinctly". The word *mleccha* definitely originates from that verb. Even a word of those who are to the east of India is not intelligible to us without learning their language. The reason for this indistinctness is that those languages have a very small number of consonants. For this reason, though it seems quite proper that our ancestors named the easterners *mlecchas*, the question why they called the westerners *Yavanas* is worth investigation. I should like to present here the outcome of the discussion held by me with my learned relative, the late Kukkila Krishna Bhatta some years ago: the sail of a boat is called *javanikaa* in Sanskrit. Since *java* means "speed", the cloth tied as sail to a boat to increase its speed is called *javanikaa*. The curtain used in a theatre is also called *javanikaa*, or *yavanikaa*. In Sanskrit the sounds *j* and *y* are interchangeable. The cloth used for boat-sails necessarily has to be thick. Such clothes alone were used as curtains in our ancient theatres. The curtain was hung to conceal the green room from the stage. Whenever a sudden incident had to be shown, the actor would rush onto the stage pushing the curtain. In such cases the stage directions such as *paṭaakṣepeṇa praviśati* (enters pushing the curtain) are found frequently in the Sanskrit plays. To be pushed forcibly and to conceal the greenroom totally the curtain has to be specially thick. The cloth used for the curtain and the one used for being tied to a boat should have been similar. For this reason, it seems, both the objects got the same name. There are other instances also of the same name being applied to different objects on the same ground. The big carpet spread on the floor on which people sleep is called *guḍaara* (in Kannada). The word as such does not suit the object. But it is applied to this object because the cloth used is as thick as the one used for preparing a tent which is *guḍaara* (in Kannada). Since *yavana* *(='javana')* literally means a "a means to speed" the name is applicable to the horse also. (The words *turaga*, *turaṅga* and *turaṅgama* -all meaning the horse have the derivational meaning of "that which runs speedily"). The country to the west of India is the home of horses. Even now the best horses come to our country from only there. So the word *yavanadeśa* must have meant "land of horses". Since the Greeks were also the westerners to India, it is not surprising that they too were called *yavanas*. There is nothing strange in the word *yoṇa* which appears to be the derivative of Yavana being applied to the Greeks). It is said in the Raghuvamśa that Raghu, after defeating the Persians, marched to the north and defeated the Hunas. So it must be concluded that at the time of Kalidasa the Hunas had not yet entered India. The defeat of the Sakas also is not mentioned there. The historians say that in the 1st century A.D. the Sakas entered our country, founded their kingdom, and Kaniska the strongest of them, founded an empire.

Should we not infer that Kalidasa must have been prior to these incidents? Since he wrote the play Maalavaikaagnimitra, it is clear that he is later than Agnimitra or a contemporary of his. According to history, Agnimitra ruled in Vidishanagar in the 1st century B.C. There are evidences to show that in the early centuries of the Christian era, the Satavahanas founded strong kingdoms in Deccan and ruled there. In the description of King Raghu's victory march in Raghuvamśa no king or region of Deccan is mentioned. So Kalidasa must have been prior to the incident of the Satavahanas making the city of Pratiṣṭhanapura which is on the bank of the Godavari their capital. For all these reasons the opinion that Kalidasa must have been in the 1st century B.C. gets strengthened. Yet, only after ascertaining the condition of southern India, specially of Tamilnadu, corresponding to that period, anything categorical can be said about the date of Kalidasa.

In Bana Bhatta's Kaadambarii there is an instance which supports the view that *draviḍa* means "the region full of forests". In that story, Candraapiiḍa, the hero, who happens to go to the world of Gandharvas after crossing the Himalayas goes near a temple situated in the middle of a forest on his way back. It was a temple similar to the one which we now-a-days call *maariguḍi (*the temple of blood-relishing *Durgaa).* The temple priest happened to be there. Bana has named the priest *draviḍa dhaarmika*. The forest was in a valley of the Himalayas. No connection can be found between that place and the *dravidadeśa* which is at the southernmost point of India. No evidence of the Tamilians living there in those days is available. So the word *draviḍa* in *draviḍadhaarmika* can not mean a "Tamilian". Then, what is the meaning of the word *draviḍa* there? No one has tried to deduce the correct meaning of this. But if we interpret *draviḍa* as "the region full of forests", the compound word as a whole would mean "the priest of the temple of a hill tribe". The description of the priest given by Bana makes it clear that he was a member of a hill tribe. Considering these facts, one does not hesitate to agree that the explanation of the word *draviḍa* given above is acceptable [24]

24 In the 7th issue of the 5th volume of 'Suguṇamaalaa' (a Kannada Magazine, July 1990) Sri P. V. Acharya has published a short article on the etymology of *Tamiḷ* and *Draviḍa*. In it he has quoted the opinion of the late Suniti Kumara Chatterjee, the famous linguist, thus: "These people are mostly (?) of the Mediterranean Seashore: after the Greeks conquered that place they migrated to India, settled on the coast of the Indus and expanded towards the south from there. A clan of their ancestors seems to have had the name *dramila* or *dramiza* in Crete which was the seat of an ancient civilization, *tarmilai* and *ṭṛmmili* in Asia Minor. This clan, when it came and settled in India before the Christian era, already had the names of *dramiḍa*, *dramiḷa* and *draviḷa*. As time passed, the 'r' in the first conjunct got dropped and it became *damiz*. The Greek and the Egyptian merchants called these *damira* and their region *damirike*. This became *damiḷakam = tamiḷaka(ga)m*."

Since there is no third member of the consonant-classes in Tamil, where did the sound *d* come from? This question is answered by Suniti Chattopadhyaya that Tamil once had the third member in each class (such as *d* etc.) and it dropped it about the beginning of the Christian era."

These opinions are based on the assumption that the civilization which came to light from the excavations of Mohenjodaro, Harappa, Rupar etc. of the Indus Valley was Dravidian. But the question, of which people the civilization was, is not yet settled. And no evidence has so far been available to prove the fact that the same people came and settled in the south, specially in Tamilnadu. There is ample proof to show that the Indus people were literate. Also, it has been proved that they used a special kind of script. If those who came to the south were the same as those of the Indus Valley, is there any doubt that their script also must have survived? In the oldest inscriptions of Tamilnadu, the script used is *Braahmi* (ब्राह्मी), but not the Indus script. And if the residents of the Indus Valley on the West Coast migrated to the South, why did they settle on the Southern tip of the East Coast? These questions have not yet been answered. Again, why did they not choose any region in the vast area between the Indus Valley and Tamilnadu for settlement? Instead, why did they come to the southern tip of India straightaway? Are there answers to these questions? So the fact that the Indus people came and settled in Tamilnadu is only a conjucture without evidence. And there is not the least evidence to believe that in the centuries before

Christ Tamil had the third member of the consonant classes. Further, the reason why it dropped the third member is beyond imagination. As is well known, in the most ancient inscriptions (Brahmi script) discovered in Tamilnadu the third member is not found. In the Dravidian languages, which have the third member to-day, the first member may change into the third, but not vice versa. Example: in Kannada, *tumbi* > *dumbi*, *keḷeya* > *geḷeya*, *kiiru* > *giiru*; in Tulu, *kooru̥* > *gooru̥*, *kiisuḷi* > *giisuḷi*, *kaṇṭapucce* > *gaṇṭapucce* etc. But in *gaḍi*, *gaaḷi*, *daṭṭa*, *baridu* of Kannada and of *dumbu*, *dombu*, *bare* etc. of Tulu, the third member in the beginning has nowhere changed into the first. So to say that Tamil had the third member and that later it lost it is a mere conjecture.

In the inference that a people called *dramizs*, who were attacked by the Greeks settled in the Indus region and built up a new civilization, there is a big fallacy regarding time. As held by the Western scholars themselves, the Greeks conquered the regions such as Crete and drove the inhabitants away in the 2nd millennium B.C. But the glorious period of the Indus civilization was before 3000 B.C., as the western scholars themselves have decided! When this is so, the speculative edifice that the *Damizs* settled in the Indus region has no foundation. Merely depending upon the similarity of a word in two languages, without any other evidence, to conclude that the speakers of the two languages belong to the same origin and are the migrants from the same place though their present habitats are separated by thousands of miles is highly regrettable. If we follow this argument regarding migration, it can even be concluded that the ancestors of the present *Canada* must have once belonged to our North Kanara district. For, the North Kanara district till recently had the name of *Kaanaḍaa*. Two popular magazines published from there in the beginning of the present century were named *Kaanaḍaavṛtta* and *Kaanaḍaadhuriiṇa* respectively. (In English *Kaanaḍaa* becomes "Canara". The sound *ḍ* in our placenames was changed into *r* by the English. Examples are many: *Dhaaravaaḍa* > *Dharwar*, *Maḍikeeri* > *Mercara* etc. For this change the reason is that the *ḍ* we pronounce does not exist in English and the *r* of their's is not our retroflex *r* but a clear post alveolar trill.)

Chapter II

THE PROFUNDITY OF MEANING OF THE VEDA

Some of the words used in the Vedas are also responsible for the conclusion of the Western scholars that the date of the Vedas is not earlier than 2000 B.C. The language of the Vedas was the spoken language of a particular community of that time. The words of any spoken language undergo changes in meaning in course of time. For example, the Kannada word *kirukuḷa* at present means "nuisance". In old Kannada it meant "an insignificant man". In old Kannada the word *amma* meant "father". As we know, to-day the word has changed its meaning into "mother". The word *chala* meant "fraud" earlier. The word *abhimaana* or *kali* did not mean a virtue desirable, in early days. Considering their present meanings, it is possible to understand how meanings change from time to time. To illustrate from the Vedas, in the Vedic langauge *loha* meant "copper". In later Sanskrit the word came to mean "iron".[25] Consequently it cannot be doubted that the meaning of the Veda is hard to ascertain.

Among the available writings that have attempted an explication of the Vedic words, Yaska's 'Nighaṇṭu' is the oldest. In the introduction to this work he states: "Some say that the Vedic hymns are meant only for oral recitation and that they have no meaning as such; some others, saying that certain

25 Since our ancient works refer to the armour of our soldiers as *loha kavaca*, it is mistaken for "iron armour". In fact, they were made of copper wires, not of iron. Since iron gets rusted, it is not the metal to be used in armours.

sentences occurring in them allude to ancient stories, interpret them in various ways. But I declare that both these opinions are incorrect. I categorically hold that the Vedic words, because they have a traceable origin, do have a meaning.[26] Therefore, having analysed them grammatically, I intend to bring to light their meaning."[27] Yaska is anterior to Panini. According to both the Western and the Eastern scholars his period is the 7th century B.C. It is worth noting in this context that even in such an ancient period the Veda had become unintelligible to the scholars. After Yaska, many commentaries were written on the Vedas and the most popular among them was Sayana's 'Bhaaṣya'. It is held to be of the 14th century A.D. Modern scholars understand the Vedas usually on the basis of Sayana's commentary. When we look into Sayana's 'Bhaaṣya', we understand that he traced the origin of many Puranic stories to the Veda by taking the current meaning of the Vedic words used in Sanskrit. These Puranic stories belong to an age, long after that of Yaska. On the other

26 Additionally, according to Yaaska, the Vedic hymns have three layers of meaning, namely, of the physical level, of the theological level and of the spiritual level. Some instances of this he has explained in his treatise. It can be said that the *Gaayatriimantra* with which all the initiated are familiar illustrates this point. On the face of, it is a praise of the Sun god. But the meaning of the word *savitr* is not confined to the sun alone. It also means "Creator". When this meaning is taken it becomes the praise of the Creator also. In addition to having, these two meanings, it also becomes a meditation on the Supreme Being who actuates our intellect from within.

27 In the references to Yaska, his actual words have not been presented. Instead, only the gist of his statements is given from memory. (Since I have lost my eyesight, I cannot read the treatise again.)

hand, Dayananda Saraswati, founder of the "Aaryasamaaja", having accepted Yaska's position and having concluded that all the Vedic words are derived ones, gives his own interpretation. There is a vast difference between these two commentaries. Dayananda's 'Bhaaṣya' differs totally from Sayana's.

Among those who have translated the Veda into English, Max Mueller is the most famous. The (modern) historians, having studied neither Sanskrit nor the Veda, accept Max Mueller's opinions and construct the history of our country. They never care to get a first hand knowledge of the Vedas. Hence, the Vedic expressions are being misinterpreted and all our notions about the ancestors of our country are becoming erroneous. Even the scholars who have dimly noticed these defects do not attempt at removing them. (Of course the attempt is Herculean. Historians are after fame and name rather than truth and the seekers of truth are regrettably rare.)

But, even if scholars make an honest and original attempt to interpret the Veda, without depending on the traditional commentaries, they may not be completely successful. The reasons are many. Though the Vedic words are considered to be derived, one single and unambiguous meaning cannot be ascribed to them. For, in Sanskrit there are many occasions when, analysed according to their etymology, the meanings of the words are more than one. Let us take the word *paṅkaja* with which all of us are familiar. *Paṅka* means "mud". The derived meaning of *paṅkaja* is "something born in mud or slime." Since the word is applicable to more than one object born in mud, it might mean "lotus plant" which is born in mud, "frog" which is also born in mud, "mother-of-pearl" which also is an object originating in mud or any other object of that character. When the word *paṅkaja* occurs in a sentence the meaning has to be decided according to the context. The choice of the meaning in a given context depends on the leaning of the commentator. So, according to the intentions

of the commentators, the import of a sentence differs. Therefore, when explanation is offered under the assumption that all the Vedic words are derived, multiplicity of meaning is inevitable. In such a case, it is not possible to determine whose explanation is acceptable. Therefore, it may not even be proper to interpret the Vedic words etymologically.

The other approach - to decide the meaning according to the connotations of later Sanskrit - leads to another kind of error. For, there are instances in the Veda when, contrary to current usage, one has to interpret the words etymologically. For example, in later Sanskrit, the word *asura* (असुर) in all contexts means "demon". But in a Vedic hymn Indra is addressed as *asura*. It is absurd to call the King of gods an enemy of gods. Then, what does *asura* mean here? To know this, the root of *asura* should be examined. When the word is analysed according to its etymology, it means "one who gives life" *(asu* (असु) = life, *ra* (र) = giver; *asuun raati iti* (असून् राति इति).) It is quite clear that, in this hymn in praise of Indra, the word can only mean "giver of life", not a "demon". Since such contexts in the Veda are many, the attempt to derive the meaning of the Veda on the basis of current meaning, ignoring the original meaning, will lead to erroneous interpretation. But mere etymological meaning also will not be appropriate always, as shown above. Therefore, the correct interpretation of the Veda is almost impossible. Only a few obvious expressions here and there can be explained; to know the whole meaning of the Veda with certainty is well-nigh impossible for anyone to-day. When we realize that as early as the 7th century B.C., when people who were much more familiar with the Veda, the commentators were not sure of the Vedic meaning, we wonder how it is possible for us to explain the Veda in uniquivocal terms in the present period which is separated from the Veda by many centuries and in which a large number of words therein have undergone changes in meaning.

If very limited success at least should be achieved in this task it is necessary for a team of open-minded and truth-seeking scholars, who possess a very deep knowledge of Sanskrit grammar, Nirukta and as said earlier, of the three divisions of the Vedic literature, namely, the Samhitaa, the Braahmaṇa and the Upanishad, to work collectively. Even then, some differences of opinion are bound to exist.

Let me give one or two illustrations regarding the difference of opinion in Vedic interpretations: As we all know, the Upanishads in Sanskrit literature are called the *Vedaanta*. But there is no unanimity regarding the meaning of even this word. For, the word *anta*" means "end" as well as "inside". One group of scholars holds the view that the word *Vedaanta* means the "last part of the Veda", while another holds that the *Upaniṣads* and the *Braahmaṇas* fall outside the range of the Veda and that the word *Vedaanta* means "the inside = secret" of the Veda. Both camps have eminent scholars and traditional *aacaaryas* in themselves. If we follow the second group, we shall get a clue regarding the way of interpreting the 'samhitaa' portion. If we follow the first group, we come across many a self-contradiction. For, the *samhitaa* is full of hymns in praise of deities, whereas the *Upaniṣads* describe the one Supreme Being. As is known generally, the word *Upaniṣad* means "that which is preached sitting near", that is, "confidentially". So, it appears to my humble mind that it is proper to take the word *Vedaanta* to mean "the secret (essence) of the Veda)".[28] Accepting this meaning, if we

28 The Bhagavadgiita also supports my argument. The second part of the 15th *śloka* of the 15th chapter runs like this:

वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो ।
वेदान्तकृत् वेदविदेवचाहम् ।।

vedaiśca sarvairahamevavedyo
vedaantakṛt vedavideva caaham

(Bhagavadgiita 15.15.)

It is to be noted that in these stanzas the Veda and the *Vedanta* (i.e. *Upaniṣads*) are treated separately.

The word *anta* also means "inside" according to the lexicographical works. Here and there do we also find the word used in this sense by the ancient poets:

1. कृष्ण त्वदीय पदपंकजपञ्जरान्त
अद्यैव मे विशतु मानसराजहंसः ।
kṛṣṇa tvadiiya padapaṅkajapañjaraante
adyaiva me viśatu maanasaraajahamsaḥ
(O! Krishna! may now itself enter my mind – royal swan – the inner cavity of the cage, namely your lotus-feet.)

- Mukundamaalaastotra.

2. संप्रत्यन्ये वयमुपरतं मोहमास्था वनान्ते ।
sampratyanye vayamuparatam mohamasthaa vanaante
[Now have we changed, worldly desire has ceased, inclination towards the inner region of the forest (has set in)]

- Bhartrihari

3. यस्यान्तम् न विदुः सुरासुरगणाः देवाय तस्मै नमः ।
yasyaantam na viduḥ suraasuragaṇaaḥ devaaya tasmai namaḥ
[Bow to that Lord whose innermost region (secret) has not been reached even by the groups of gods and demons.]

- Bhagavadgiita meditation verse.

The word *anta* meaning "inside" or "inner region", when used metaphorically, means the "inner state" or "secret". So the word *anta* within the compound *Vedaanta (veda + anta) expresses the sense "secret". Since the Vedanta* and the *Upaniṣads* are the same and the word *Upaniṣad* is the exact equivalent of "secret" in Sanskrit there is nothing inappropriate in holding that the correct interpre-tation of the word *Vedaanta* is "the secret meaning of the Veda".

try to understand the *samhitaa* portions depending upon the etymological meanings wherever necessary, and if we remember the statement of Yaska that there are three layers of meaning applicable to the Veda, many contradictions between the *samhitaas* and the *Upaniṣads* can be resolved. The *Ṛk- samhitaa* itself contains a passage which states that though there occur the names of a large number of deities all of them are the names of one God. This is the passage:

इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुः ।
अथो दिव्यः ससुपर्णो गरुत्मान् ।।
एकं सत् विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति ।
अग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ।।

indram mitram varuṇamagnimaahuḥ
atho divyaḥ sasuparṇo garutmaan
ekam sat vipraa bahudhaa vadanti
agnim yamam maatariśvaanamaahuḥ

(Ṛgveda 1.164-46)

What this passage clearly states is that the wise praise the One God by different names.

Now-a-days, as soon as we hear the word *devataa* we feel that it means a 'superhuman being' and that *Agni, Vaayu* and others whom the hymns praise are different personalities. But the above quoted hymn declares that they are the names of the One. If the etymological meaning of the word *devataa* is taken, the contradiction disappears.

The derived meaning of the word *devataa* is "divine-ness".[29] The seers found divinity in all objects perceptible to

29 The system of gender in Sanskrit is not based on the meaning of the words but their form. (In the Dravidian languages or English

senses. Apprehending the greatness of the Creator in them, they looked upon the qualities of those objects with reverence and

the system of gender follows the meaning. If the meaning of the words indicates a male person, the gender is masculine; if it indicates a female person, it is feminine, and if it indicates an object which has neither maleness or femaleness and is an insentient material, the gender is neuter. Moreover, the words that refer to non-human beings, be they male or female, are declared as neuter. Some exceptions may be found in English. Example: ship (fem.); dog (common.), bitch (fem.) etc. The fact that the infant boys and girls are treated as neuter in the Dravidian languages is an exception in those languages.) Though the word *devataa* (देवता) is feminine, it is applicable to the words meaning male persons. Example: *Vaamadevarṣiḥ paṅkti chandaḥ sadaa-śivarudro devataa* (वामदेवर्षिः पङ्क्ति छन्दः सदाशिवरुद्रोदेवता) - here the deity *Rudra* conceived as male is appositionally placed with the word *devataa* which is feminine. Such examples may be multiplied. So it should not be felt that the word *devataa* refers to a (female) person. All the words with the secondary suffix *-taa* (-ता) are feminine. Similarly all the words with the secondary suffix *-tva* (-त्व) are neuter. The difference between the words *devataa* and *devatva* (देवत्व) is only, thus, in form. In fact, they mean the same. It is not correct to think that the word *devataa* refers to a female person alone. When we realize the fact that though the words *agni, vaayu, suurya* etc. are masculine they are appositionally compounded with the word *devataa* forming the compounds such *agnidevataa, vaayudevataa* and *suurya-devataa* etc., we become aware of the fact that *devtaa* also means the same as *devatva*. Similarly, it is also not proper to think that since the words *agni, vaayu* and *suurya* are masculine they refer to male persons. They refer merely to the spirit of the object concerned.

praised the One through the names of those objects. For this reason, the hymns were named after particular deities. The Bhagavadgiita elaborates the same point in its tenth chapter entitled *Vibhuutiyoga*. In the beginning of this chapter Arjuna asks Krishna:

केषु केषु च भावेषु चिन्त्योऽसि भगवन्मया ।

keṣu keṣu ca bhaaveṣu cintyo(a)si bhagavanmayaa

(Bhagavadgiita *10-17).*

In reply Krishna names many a resplendent object and says that they all (or the brilliance in them) are He Himself. He states in the end:

यद्यत् विभूतिमत् सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।
तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोऽम्शसंभवम् ।।

yadyat vibhuutimat sattvam śriimaduurjitameva vaa
tattadevaavagaccha tvam mama tejo(a)mśasambhavam

(Bhagavadgiita *10-41)*

Having grasped the meaning of this chapter of the Bhagavadgiitaa, if we try to understand the hymns, we realize that there is no contradiction between the statement that there is only one Supreme Being and the praise of various deities in different hymns.

If we consider the meaning of a *mantra* employed in the *agnikaarya* ritual performed by one who has been initiated, the same principle comes to light:

There are three traditional forms perceptible to the eye: the fire on earth, the lightning in the mid-region, the sun in the sky. Among these, the radiant form of the mid-region is sometimes called Indra and sometimes Vaayu. The *mantra* employed in the ritual is this:

ॐ भूः स्वाहा अग्नय इदं न मम ।
ॐ भुवः स्वाहा वायव इदं न मम ।।

ॐ स्वः स्वाहा सूर्याय इदं न मम ।

ॐ भूर्भुवः स्वः स्वाहा प्रजापतय इदं न मम ।।

om bhuuḥ svaahaa agnaya idam na mama

om bhuvaḥ svaahaa vaayava idam na mama

om svaḥ svaahaa suuryaaya idam na mama

om bhuurbhuvaḥ svaḥ svaahaa prajaapataya idam na mama

Here the three deities, *Agni*, *Vaayu* and *Suurya* are mentioned as the occupants respectively of the earth, the mid-region and the sky, and oblation is offered to them with the word *svaahaa.* Lastly, all these are considered as one and the oblation is offered to the *prajaapati*, that is, to the controller of the universe who is not perceptible to the senses. In another *mantra* uttered on the same occasion, Indra is substituted for Vaayu. It is thus:

मयि मेधां मयि प्रजां मयि अग्निस्तेजो दधातु ।

मयि मेधां मयि प्रजां मयि इन्द्र इन्द्रियं दधातु ।

मयि मेधां मयि प्रजां मयि सूर्यो भ्राजो दधातु ।

mayi medhaam mayi prajaam mayi agnistejo dadhaatu

mayi medhaam mayi prajaam mayiindra indriyam dadhaatu

mayi medhaam mayi prajaam mayi suuryo bhraajo dadhaatu

If we probe into these *mantras* of the *Agnikaarya* ritual, the secret behind the multitude of divinities praised in the Vedic hymns becomes clear. The propriety of choosing the three objects perceptible to the senses, namely, *Agni*, *Vaayu* or *Indra* and *Suurya* is: the superbly radiant form which we perceive on earth is *Agni*; a similar form in the mid-region is called *Vaayu*, accompanied by lightning or *Indra.* (Because of the identity between Indra and Vaayu Indra is referred to as the giver of rains.) The radiant form above the region of the wind is *Suurya*

or the Sun. Because among these three *Agni* is the nearest to us, the Vedic rituals are performed through *Agni.*[30]

As in Sanskrit, so in the languages directly derived from it, the gender of a noun depends on its form and not meaning. In the Dravidian languages and in English the gender depends upon meaning. In these languages the rule is that the words referring to male beings constitute masculine gender, the words referring to female beings feminine gender, and the rest neuter gender. But in Sanskrit or in the languages derived from it, the system of gender is not so simple. It is possible that the two words referring to the same object happen to be in different genders. Example: the word *ghraaṇa* (घ्राण) meaning 'nose' is masculine while the word *naasikaa* (नासिका) meaning the same is feminine. The word *mitram* (मित्रं) meaning a male or female friend is neuter. (When this word means "the sun" it is masculine.) The word *daaraaḥ* (दाराः) meaning 'wife' is masculine and is also plural. (Sometimes this is used in singular also.) In Prakrit, born of Sanskrit, and in the modern Indian languages born of the Prakritas the system of gender is almost the same. Among these, some have only two genders; namely, masculine and feminine; they have no neuter gender. Hindi is such a language. In Konkani and Maraathi, there are three genders but the system is peculiar as in Sanskrit. For any one having a

30 Idols have no place in the Vedic system of worship. On the contrary, here, the objects that are visible to us in Nature and possess some greatness are worshipped. The researchers who have conducted excavations in Mohenjodaro and Harappa state that temples have not been discovered in those places as in the other spots of ancient civilizations, but only fire-altars have been discovered. This fact strongly supports the view that Harappan culture was related to the Vedic culture.

Dravidian language as his mother tongue, for example, for us who have Kannada as our mothertongue, a word in feminine gender means a female person and a word in masculine gender means a male person. But on the mental horizon of those who have the languages with peculiar gender system as their mothertongue mere form, without sex distinction, is reflected when words of different genders are uttered. If we consider the mental effects caused by one's mother tongue, it will be easy for us to understand that the mental image caused by the word *devataa* and *devatva* is the same.

Because there exist in the Veda verses in praise of deities like *Agni, Vaayu* and *Suurya*, the Western scholars were led to conclude that the seers who composed the Vedic hymns were Nature worshippers. The conclusion recorded in the histories of our country written by them is the result of their ignorance. If we probe into the matter, we will discover that it was not the physical objects that they worshipped but the different aspects of the Controller of the universe as immanant in them. When we understand that in the words like *Agnidevataa* and *Vaayudevataa, devataa* means *devatva* we will also know that the deities of the Vedic worship were not physical objects but specific aspects of the Creator. It is not easy to meditate upon an object which is Omnipresent but not perceptible to the senses. It is almost impossible to concentrate without the help of an object perceptible to the senses. So, as a result of their conceiving His presence wherever his greatness was perceptible to the senses, praises of many deities got incorporated in the Veda. When this truth is realized, it will be clear that there is no contradiction whatsoever between the import of the verse beginning with *Indram, Mitram, Varuṇam, Agnim...* and the multitude of hymns in the Veda praising a large number of deities. In the verse quoted above, after the names of many deities in the masculine gender, the neuter gender is used in the words

ekam sat (एकं सत्) meaning "the One Being". Though all the names in the verse are in masculine gender, the statement that "they are all One" is put in the neuter. The truth in the statement is that the spirit in all those deities is the one, not many. When the hymn is understood thus, the truth that the Veda does not praise physical objects, but the supreme greatness of the universe-controlling-spirit, immanent in the objects which are perceptible to our senses in the form of physical objects, dawns on us.

It is known from the ruins got from the excavations in other countries that idols had importance in the system of worship prevalent among the ancient people of those countries. But no idols have been discovered as symbols of the Vedic culture nor have the ruins of temples been available. The people of the Vedic times did not accept anything man-made as symbol of worship; instead, they chose God-made objects alone as their symbols of worship. Hence, we find hymns that praise *Agni,* or *Vaayu.*

It is regrettable that we find even in the text books written by the scholars of our own country the same opinion as that of the Westerners: the Vedic practice was the worship of natural objects such as wind, fire etc. This is due to their ignorance of the facts discussed above. It is not possible to say when such a miserable state of affairs will come to and end!

* * * * *

Chapter III

LIṄGA - ŚIVALIṄGA

It is well-known that the Vedic people offered oblation to deities through Fire. It is also known that they often performed sacrifices. But the worship of the deities through *Agni* was not performed by every one and every day. The worship performed by every one was through the Sun. Sacrifices and the fire-rituals did not need to be done by every one in the society. But the performance named *sandhyaavandana* (संध्यावन्दन) was practised (in the morning and evening) by every one initiated. The word *sandhyaavandana* means the *vandana* (वन्दन) done during the time of *sandhyaa.* (संध्या) (Though the word *sandhyaavandana* is generally used, it should be properly called *sandhyopaasana.* (संध्योपासन)) Though, now-a-days, we use the word *sandhyaa* to mean the time in which day ends, in ancient days the meaning was not confined to this period. *Sandhyaa* means the time which unites the day and the night. Therefore, the early-morning period also used to be called *praataḥ sandhyaa* (प्रातःसंध्या), and the time which now we call *sandhyaa* used to be called *saayam sandhyaa* (सायंसंध्या). Those, who were called "twice-born", had to perform *sandhyaavandana* compulsorily during these junctures of time. (Those who belong to the three *varṇas,* namely, the *Braahmaṇas,* the *Kṣatriyas* and the *Vaiśyas* are called *dvijas* - twice-born). The divine form propitiated in the *sandhyaavandana* is the Sun. So *sandhyaavandana* means the propitiation of the Sun-God.[31]

31 It is prescribed that in the morning propitiation the Sun should be addressed as *Mitra* and in the evening performance *Varuṇa.* As said earlier both *Mitra* and *Varuṇa* are the names of the same

deity. In the Veda sometimes, the dual *Mitraavaruṇau* is also found. The same deity is propitiated either monistically or pluralistically as said in the Bhagavadgiita. We may remember here that in the Veda also a similar statement is found - *ekam sadvipraa bahudhaa vadanti* (एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति). The same approach is followed in the manner of worship even in the post-Vedic periods, and the system of worshipping the One by different names continues even to-day. The principle is described by the following verse of the Mahaabhaarata:

नमोस्त्वनन्ताय सहस्रमूर्तये ।
सहस्रपादाक्षि शिरोरुबाहवे ।
सहस्रनाम्ने पुरुषाय शाश्वते ।
सहस्रकोटीयुगधारिणे नमः ।।

namostvanantaaya sahasramuurtaye
sahasrapaadaakṣi śirorubaahave
sahasranaamne puruṣaaya śaaśvate
sahasrakoṭiiyugadhaariṇe namaḥ

(Mahaabhaarata, *Anuśasanparva,* Chapter 149)

Sun-worship does not mean worship of the sun-disc of physical character; the fact that it is worshipped as the symbol of the formless Supreme Being is clarified by the following *mantra* (मन्त्र) which is uttered after the *Arghya* with the *Gaayatriimantra* (गायत्रीमन्त्र): *asaavaadityo brahma* (असावादित्यो ब्रह्म). The meaning is: '*Aaditya* is *Brahma'.* Even when idols are worshipped, the prescription is to superimpose the deity in the idol (and dissociate it from the idol in the end). The principle of 'superimposion - dissociation' and the *mantra* quoted above as the one uttered in the Sun worship have the same purport. When we consider this point, it becomes clear that the charge made by the followers of other religions that 'the followers of the eternal *dharma* of India are worshippers of physical objects' appears baseless. It is known by experience that it is impossible (for common people) to concentrate the mind on the formless without

Light is the most important among those that make the greatness of the Creator perceptible to our senses. The Vedic people concluded that where light is perceptible there exists the radiance of the Creator. Hence, they worshipped three radiant forms of the Creator.[32] Though among the three fire is the most direct to us on earth, it does not take shape without our conscious efforts. The luminary which appears in the mid-region is lightning. But it is not perceptible to us every day. The great luminary that appears to us every day and without any effort on our part is the sun. Therefore, the form of worship accessible to all was the Sun worship. No evidence is available to show the existence of temples in the Vedic period. Nor is any kind of figure worship mentioned in the Veda. People of that time had the sky for their temple and the sun for their divine image. Considered deeply, no temple more magnificent than the sky and no idol more majestic than the sun can be built by us. It would not be improper to feel that the Creator built that temple

---

the help of some physical object. Without realising this, to condemn Hinduism as idolatry is the result of mere ignorance.

32 The following verses in the 15th and the 10th chapters (of Śrimadbhagavadgiita) clarify that the import of 'Śrimadbhagavadgiita' is also the same:
यदादित्यगतं तेजो जगद्भासयतेऽखिलम् ।
यच्चन्द्रमसि यच्चाग्नौ तत् तेजो विद्धि मामकम् ।।
yadaadityagatam tejo jagadbhaasayate[a]khilam
yaccandramasi yaccaagnau tat tejo viddhi maamakam
(Bhagavadgiitaa 15-12)
यद्यद् विभूतिमत् सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।
तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोऽंश संभवम् ।।
yadyad vibhuutimat sattvam śriimaduurjitameva vaa
tattadevaavagaccha tvam mama tejo(a)mśa sambhavam
(Bhagavadgiitaa 10-41)

and placed in it his own image in the form of the sun. The people of that time conceived the presence of the Creator in that Supreme Brilliance inside that superb temple.[33]

---

33 The *Gaayatrii mantra,* which is the most important in the Sun worship, strengthens the above statement. The name of the deity propitiated by this mantra being *savitṛ* (सवितृ), which means both the "sun" and the "Creator", the *mantra* is the praise of both visible sun and the invisible Creator. This gives us an idea of the system of worship which the people of that time followed. The people of that time worshipped such objects as those in which they found the greatness of the Creator reflected. This has led some to mistake them for polytheists. But such statements as:
इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुः ।
अथो दिव्यः ससुपर्णो गरुत्मान् ।
एकं सत् विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति ।
अग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ।
indram mitram varuṇamagnimaahuḥ
atho divyaḥ sasuparṇo garutmaan
ekam sat vipraa bahudhaavadanti
agnim yamam maatariśvaanamaahuḥ
(Ṛgveda 1.164, 46)
do not give room to such opinions. They worshipped not only the One in many great objects and in many names but also Him as One alone. Śrimadbhagavadgiita also substantiates this observation:
सततं कीर्तयन्तो मां यतन्तश्च दृढव्रताः ।
नमस्यन्तश्च मां भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।।
ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाप्यन्ये यजन्तो मामुपासते ।
एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतो मुखम् ।।
satatam kiirtayanto maam yatantaśca dṛḍhavrataaḥ
namasyantaśca maam bhaktyaa nityayuktaa upaasate
jñaanayajñena caapyanye yajanto maamupaasate

To-day there are innumerable temples in our country. In addition, every Hindu- specially the Braahmana- has some kind of image in his own house which he worships. Nevertheless, the tradition of sun-worship, which was prevalent during the Vedic period, continues even today. The popular name of such worship is *sandhyaavandana*. Among the mantras recited during the *sandhyaavandana*, the *gaayatrii* is the most important. The mantra has been explained to some extent in the previous chapter. This is in the form of a hymn, open to many interpretations. As far as the most explicit meaning is concerned, this mantra praises the Sun. Probing deeply, we understand that this is the praise of the Creator, and that it covertly refers to the Supreme Spirit. In addition to this, two more mantras are recited in the *sandhyaavandana* to-day. Of these, one is the *aṣṭaakṣarii* (अष्टाक्षरी) and the other the *pañcaakṣarii* (पञ्चाक्षरी). Since Hinduism in the post-Vedic periods took various forms for diverse reasons, deities such as *Indra, Agni* etc. lost their importance and some other deities came to prominence. Among those which attained prominence newly, *Viṣṇu* or *Naaraayaṇa, Iiśvara* or *Śiva* are the two deities which became the most popular. Consequently, the two *mantras*, namely, the *aṣṭaakṣarii* and the *pañcaakṣarii* were incorporated into the *sandhyaavandana*. The *aṣṭaakṣarii* is *om namo naaraayaṇaaya* (ॐ नमो नारायणाय) and the *pañcaakṣarii* (ॐ नमः शिवाय) is *om namaḥ śivaaya*.[34] (Since there are six syllables

ekatvena pṛthaktvena bahudha viśvatomukham
(Bhagavadgiitaa 9-14, 15)

34 *Om* is the syllable indicating the formless Supreme *Brahman*. This syllable is uttered generally in the beginning of all the mantras addressed to different deities. (This is uttered in the beginning of the *Gaayatrii mantra* also.) The reason is: whatever is uttered after this syllable is the praise of the Supreme *Brahman*

in *om namaḥ śivaaya* the *Viiraśaivas* call it *ṣaḍakṣara mantra* (षडक्षरमन्त्र). Some omit the *om* and recite merely *namaḥ śivaaya*; this they call *pañcaakṣarii*.) The meaning of both the *mantras* is simple. Of them, the *aṣṭaakṣarii* (अष्टाक्षरी) means "veneration to *Naaraayaṇa* who is in the form of the syllable *om* (ॐ)". The other means "veneration to Siva who is in the form of the syllable *om* (ॐ)." Yet these are not different from the Sun worship. The explanation is:

There is a verse that describes how *Naaraayaṇa* should be meditated upon. It begins thus:

ध्येयः सदा सवितृमण्डलमध्यवर्ती ।
नारायणः सरसिजासनसन्निविष्टः ॥

dhyeyaḥ sadaa savitṛmaṇḍalamadhyavartii
naaraayaṇaḥ sarasijaasanasanniviṣṭaḥ

The gist of this stanza is: *Naaraayaṇa* who is in the middle of the Sun-disc should be meditated upon.[35] Similarly, *Śaaivism*

(परब्रह्मन्) indicated by this *om* (ॐ).

35 Also, in the Sun-worship, the sun is addressed by twelve names. In addition to the rituals in the morning and in the evenning, some perform the *sandhyaavandana* in the noon also, the point at which the forenoon and the afternoon meet. This is called *maadhyaanhika*. At that time, the twelve names of the Sun are uttered and water is offered. Since he has twelve names the sun is conceived as "one having twelve forms". The names are: *Dhaatṛ, Aryaman, Mitra, Varuṇa, Indra, Vivasvata, Parjanya, Puuṣan, Amśumat, Gabhastimat, Tvaṣṭr* and *Viṣṇu* (धातृ, अर्यमन्, मित्र, वरुण, इन्द्र, विवस्वत्, पर्जन्य, पूषन्, अंशुमत्, गभस्ति, त्वष्टृ, विष्णु). It is worth noting tha *Viṣṇu* is also one among these twelve names. Since *Viṣṇu* is one among the twelve *Aadityas* it is clear that the names *Viṣṇu* and *Aaditya* (*Suurya*) are of the same deity.

establishes identity between Siva and the Sun. Saivas conceive Siva as *aṣṭamuurti* (अष्टमूर्ति) and meditate upon Him. Among the eight forms of Siva one is the Sun. (The sun, the moon, the sky, the air, the fire, the water, the earth and the individual soul are the eight forms of Siva.) Since these are the constituents of the greatness of the Omnipotent manifest to us, they are conceived as His eight forms. If we analyse the concept of Siva as *aṣṭamuurti*, we realise that the whole universe is viewed as constituting His form.)

Thus, as is discernible from an examination of the mantras used in the *sandhyaavandana* which is in practice even to-day, worship in the Vedic tradition was only in the form of Sun-worship. Though image-worship is practised to-day in temples and almost in every house, it is not the worship that is obligatory on every one. It might be said that the offering through Fire which was prevalent in the Vedic period was, almost like the image worship of to-day, optional. Though almost in every house of the Brahmins of to-day, some kind of image-worship is performed, in the houses of the dvijas of the other *varṇas* it is rarely found. Similarly, in the houses of the ancient Brahmins and in the mansions of kings the worship through Fire existed; it might not have been so in the houses of the other *varṇas*.

Among the idols of worship, to-day, in the houses of the Brahmins, a symbol of a particular deity having human form is rarely found. Though the human form is not prohibited the symbol required is of a different type. The symbol of one form

This has been indicated in the Śrimadbhagavadgiita also:
Adityaanaamaham viṣṇuḥ (आदित्यानामहं विष्णुः)
(Among the *Aadityas* I am *Viṣṇu* - Bhagavadgiita, Ch. 10)
Everyone accepts that *Viṣṇu* and *Naaraayaṇa* are the same.

is called *śaalagraama* (शालग्राम) and that of the other form *śivaliṅga* (शिवलिंग). Both these are not the images of any person but are only symbols. It has already been suggested that the deities who became popular after the Vedic period were Siva and Vishnu. The *Śivaliṅga and the śaalagraama* are the symbols representing Siva and Vishnu respectively. I would like to explain why and how this kind of worship came into practice.

The worship through the Fire or the Sun is a form of worshipping the Manifest. It is acceptable to all and so could be and was practised by both the learned and the ignorant. But the learned or the wise were not satisfied with this, and meditated upon the Unmanifest with the keen intention of realizing it. They shared the experience with those of similar bent of mind, turned away from worldliness, and held the attempts to attain the true knowledge of the Creator to be the sole aim of life. As a result, there arose a system of philosophy known as the *Vedaanta* (वेदान्त). Though this principle is found in some of the Vedic hymns also the texts exclusively meant to establish it are the *Upaniṣads*. (The *Upaniṣad* known as the *Iiśaavaasya* (ईशावास्य) is a part of the *Yajussamhitaa* (यजुस्संहिता). Some hold *Puruṣa-suukta* which is a hymn of the Rgveda to be an *Upaniṣad*. The *Naasadiiya suukta* of the Rgveda also deserves to be called an *Upaniṣad*.) The practice found in the *Upaniṣad* is not the worshp of the Manifest. It is the approach towards the Unmanifest through meditation alone.[36]

36 In the *Upaniṣads*, the Supreme Being is called *Brahman* (ब्रह्मन्). (This is a word in neuter gender. As in the verse previously quoted *ekam sadvipraa bahudhaa vadanti* - so is the Universe-controller named here in neuter. The word *Brahman* when it means the Creator, gets the form *Brahmaa* (ब्रह्मा). This has the synonyms such as *Prajaapati*, *Hiraṇyagarbha* (प्रजापति,

The secret of this practice is to train the mind, which is fickle, to concentrate on a single issue. To prevent the senses

---

हिरण्यगर्भ) etc. But the word *Brahma* in neuter gender has no such synonyms. It means only the "Supreme Principle".) So the wisdom of the Upanishads is known as *Brahmavidyaa* (ब्रह्मविद्या). And the work in the form of aphorisms, composed by Seer Baadaraayaṇa, which systematically organizes the ideas of the *Upaniṣads* is known as *Brahmasuutra* or *Vedaanta darśana*. The Bhagavadgiita also is a work that contains the essence of the *Upaniṣads*. So it is also called *Upaniṣad* there. After these works were composed, the *Upaniṣads*, the Brahmasuutras and Bhagavadgiita came to be recognized as those that establish the basic tenets of ancient Indian religion and were named the *prasthaanatraya*. Since there is importance in these not for the sacrificial rituals but only for *Brahman* - knowledge (attempt at knowing the Supreme) the Western scholars, who wrote the history of our country, named it "Brahman-ism" (ब्रह्ममतं) in order to dinstinguish it from the ancient Vedic ritualism. Since the English script doesn't have symbols to represent long and short vowels, some people pronounced this as *Braahman-ism* and made it current. For this reason, teachers in our educational institutions, while teaching history, teach the students *braahmanism*! Also, in the history books written in Kannada, the word *Brahmanism* is translated as *Braahmaṇamata* (ब्राह्मणमत - the relgion of the Brahmins) and not as *Brahmamata* (ब्रह्ममत - knowledge of the *Brahman*). (In the English-Kannada Dictionary, published by Mysore University, the word is noted as meaning "the religion of the *Braahmaṇas!!*) There is no need to explain the difference in the meanings between the "knowledge concerning *Brahman*" and "the religion of the *Braahmaṇas*". Would not this example (*Brahmanism* = religion of the *Braahmaṇas!*) alone suffice to show how deformed the history taught in our institutions is?

from pulling the mind in different directions is a hard task. If the mind has to concentrate on something, the extroversion of the senses has to be checked. So, if all the senses are made to rest on a thing which can be the object of any one of the senses, specially the eye, the mind also rests there. This can be experienced by all. The act of meditating upon the Supreme with total concentration is called *Yoga* (योग). This is the worship of the Unmanifest. The attempt in this direction led to the formulation of a particular system, variously known as *Yoga-śaastra* (योगशास्त्र), *dhyaanayoga* (ध्यानयोग) or *raajayoga* (राजयोग) (=*Paatañjalayoga* (पातंजलयोग)). When one starts the practice of *yoga*, since some object perceptible to the senses is necessary in order to achieve concentration, one generally places a concrete object before one's eyes. But if the object resembles an animal or man, he cannot create an awareness of the Formless Spirit. Therefore, a stone which is plain, round and projecting upwards, not man-made, was brought in to be identified with the Supreme and was meditated upon. Such a stone is known as *liṅga*. (It is no wonder that common people took such stones to be most holy and worthy of daily worship, since they were the means used in the meditation on the Supreme Being. Their holiness is testified to by the *liṅga* worn always on the neck by the Saiva sects such as the *Viraśaiavas*. Originally Saivism was yogic while Vaiṣṇa-vism was devotional.) Since the word *liṅga* has many meanings, many interpretations have arisen regarding *liṅga* worship. Therefore, what *liṅga* really means is worth discussing.

The original meaning of the word *liṅga* was "characteristic feature" or "mark of identification", as found in the *śaastric* and literary works in Sanskrit. In them, the chief feature through which we identify an object is named *liṅga*. In the ancient works on Ayurveda, the symptoms of diseases are in all places named *liṅgas*. Bharavi uses the word *varṇiliṅgii* to mean "one having

the marks of a *Brahmacaarin* (Kiraataarjuniiya).[37] The word *liṅga*, which became current in this sense, also came to mean "an object indicating the features of another" or "symbol". The *śivalinga* mentioned above really means "the symbol of śiva". Since the symbol of Vishnu had come to be called *śaalagraama*, the white stone standing for the symbol of Siva was called simply *liṅga*. (That, according to the *Puraaṇas*, Vishnu is black and Siva is white is well-known. The *śaalagraama* is available only in the river Gaṇḍaki of Nepal. Since the town on the bank of this river is called *śaalagraama* the stone is also known by the same name. *śivaliṅga* is available in the river Narmada. Since marble-stones exist in large quantity in the place where it flows the currents dash against them and in the course of millions of years, they have been shaped into smooth and round stones. Such stones are the *śivaliṅgas*.)

Liṅga is a term in grammar also. In Sanskrit grammar, a noun-base is also called *liṅga*. [The Kannada grammarians also, who have followed Sanskrit grammarians closely, have employed the term. Since in Sanskrit nouns alone are used with the suffixes indicating masculine, feminine and neuter genders the employment of the term has not caused any confusion. But since, in Kannada, verbs also have gender-distinction, it has led to some confusion. Because of this reason, in the grammars of

37 The word *varṇi* means *brahmaacaari*. As said previously, when one is born, whichever be the varna of the parents, one is a *śuudra*. He becomes *dvija* after being initiated. The dvijas are of three classes- the *Braahmaṇa*, the *Kṣatriya* and the *Vaiśya*. Since the *Brahmaacaarin* happens to be one among these three, he gets the name *varṇin*. If we remember that the word *varṇa* is a derivative of the root *vṛ* (choose), the propriety of the *brahmaacaarin* being called *varṇin* becomes clear.

(old) Kannada, the word *liṅga* came to have two meanings. The first is of "noun-base" while the second is "indicatory of distinctions such as male-female". It would have been better had the Kannada grammarians not used the word *liṅga* in the sense of "noun-base". Nor was there any necessity of using it so. For there were already two terms, namely, *praatipadika* and *naamaprakṛti* meaning that concept. The Kannada grammarians have used them also. So it is both unprofitable and inappropriate.]

In grammar, the *liṅga* or Gender is of three kinds: masculine, feminine and neuter. To be explicit: a masculine word is the word referring to a male being; a feminine word is the word referring to a female being and a neuter word is the word which refers to an object which is neither. Here *liṅga* is the equivalent of the "gender" in English grammar; it is not the equivalent of the word "sex".

Since the word *liṅga* has the meaning of "characteristic feature", it came to mean the distinction between the male and the female. Thus it came to mean "sex" also. Since the part which denotes whether a being is male or female is private, and since to mention it directly is considered obscene, the word *liṅga* was used in its place. (All languages have this tendency of using a sophisticated word for an unsophisticated one. This is called "Euphemism" in English.)[38] Because of this usage, the word *liṅga* came to mean the "private part" also. (The fact that the private part of a woman is denoted by the word *yoni* is also due to the tendency of employing a "decent" word in the place of an

38 In our poetics, the word *udaaratаa* is used more or less in the same sense. Example: *agraamyatvamudaaratаa* (*udaaratаa* is non-obscene), ('Rasagaṅgaadhara' - Jagannatha Pandita.)

"indecent" one. In fact, the word *yoni* means "womb", not the private part of a woman. In Ayurveda *yoniroga* (योनिरोग) means the "disease of the womb". It is clear from this that *yoni* does not mean that part of the body which manifests femininess.)[39] Though it is possible to use the word *liṅga* to refer to the private part of both man and woman, the current usage restricts it to only one of the private parts of men, namely, penis (*śiśna* (शिश्न) - Sanskrit). The reason for this is the usage of the word *yoni* to mean the private part of a woman.

39 It is possible that when a 'decent' word is used in the place of something indecent, the 'decent' word also comes to mean something indecent. All languages testify to this. An example from Kannada: the verb root *kee* originally meant "to lie down". In the root list of the "Śabdamaṇidarpana" the author explains it as *kee śayane nidhuvane ca* (के शयने निधुवने च). Now *kee* means "copulation" in most of the regions of Karnataka. Once "copulation" must have been signified by some colloquial word. Since the word *kee* came to be used in its place the root *kee* to-day got settled as meaning "copulate". Tulu, a sister language of Kannada, even to-day has the word *kee* to mean "to lie down", without any indecency whatsoever going with it. Even the Kannada word *malagu*, because of euphemism, may mean something obscene. The word *haḍu* which, in modern Kannada, is used only in an obscene sense, was originally (in the form of *paḍu*) a word having quite a decent sense. [The word *paṭṭi*, a derivative of the root *paḍu* of old Kannada (example: *turupaṭṭi* = cowshed) has become *haṭṭi* in modern Kannada and is current without any obscene sense. The shepherds above ghats call their house *haṭṭi* itself. In Dakshina Kannada *haṭṭi* means "cowshed", that is, the place where cows lie down. No obscene sense has been attached to it.]

Since the word *liṅga* which carried a 'decent' meaning originally, came to be considered 'obscene', its consequences have been many. Since the word *liṅga* is restricted to the symbol of only Siva, people were deluded to believe that it was the symbol of his phallus. It is not only the common men but also the learned that were misled by this belief. Further, scholars, who were misled thus, recorded such wrong notions in their books. Later, even stories supporting this notion were invented and interpolated in the *Puraaṇas*. The story of the Sage, Bhṛgu, who attempted to know who among the Trinity was the greatest is well-known. It may be remembered that according to that story, when Bhṛgu went to Kailasa Siva was in sexual union with Parvati, and did not treat the sage properly. This enraged the sage, who cursed Siva with these words: "May your *śisna*' be worshipped hereafter". In another story, which is still more ridiculous, it is said that when Siva, enamoured of a virtuous woman, appeared naked before her, she uttered a similar curse. Similar to Siva, Vishnu also has been condemned in the *Puraaṇas*. In the story of *Tripurasamhaara*, it is said that Vishnu roamed naked in front of the *Raakṣasa* women to violate their chastity and aroused lust in them. Consequently, their husbands lost their power and were defeated easily.[40] In another story, Vishnu is

40 Among the ten incarnations of Viṣṇu, Buddha is the ninth. Since Buddha preached non-violence condemning sacrifice etc. some traditionalists who were partial towards sacrifices did not like the idea of accepting Gautama Buddha as an incarnation. They named Viṣṇu, who appeared naked in the story of *Tripurasamhaara*, as the Buddha and made him the ninth incarnation. Our Purandaradasa, Kanakadasa and others also, having accepted this, have described him as naked: "(bow) to the Buddha who stood naked." But, as narrated in the *Puraaṇas*, *Tripurasamhaara* is a story of the *Kṛta* Age (कृतयुग). (Example:

said to have violated the chastity of Jalandhara's wife when he was away from home.[41]

Tripuram bendudu rudranim kṛtayugapraarambhado] - *Tripura was burnt by Rudra at the beginning of the Kṛta* Age' - Kannada poet Ranna.) Should the ninth incarnation not have been after the Krishna incarnation, the eighth? The Krishna incarnation is an event of the *Dvaapara* (द्वापर) Age! As all know, the sequence of *yugas* is: *Kṛta, Treta, Dvaapara* and *Kali*, why the inconsistency did not strike the Daasas is not known. As a matter of fact, it is found that the Buddha was accepted as the ninth incarnation by the *Vaiṣṇavas*, about one thousand years ago. For example: In the Giitagovinda of Jayadeva; the first verse praising the ten incarnations describes:

निन्दसि यज्ञविधेरखिलश्रुतिजातम् ।
सदयहृदय दर्शितपशुघातम् ।।
केशव! धृतबुद्धशरीर ।
जय जगदीश हरे ।।

nindasi yajñavidherakhilaśrutijaatam
sadayahṛdaya darśitapaśughaatam
keśava! dhṛtabuddhaśariira
jayajagadiiśa hare

(Giitagovinda, 1.9.)

Also, it is tradtional for our priests to mention the time and the place in the beginning of a religious rite. If we note that in such cases to indicate the time of the ritual the word *Bauddhavataare* is uttered, meaning that the ritual takes place after the time of the Buddha, the ninth incarnation (before the time of the tenth incarnation) it becomes obvious that there is no relation between the naked Buddha of *Tripurasamhaara* and GautamaBuddha, the ninth incarnation.

41 In some *Puraaṇas* it is said that the wife of Jalandhara was *Vṛndaadevi* (वृन्दादेवी), and that though her chastity was violated she remained holy by the touch of Viṣṇu and that she appears in the form of *Tulasii* plant and is worshipped by all. In some other works it has been described that Vṛndaa means "Tulasii plant" since it became equated with Raadhaa, beloved of Viṣṇu, and that since the plant is the same as Raadhaa Viṣṇu is worshipped with Tulasii leaves. Of these two versions, the former is current in southern India and the latter in Western and northern India. (*Bṛndaavana* means 'a garden of *Tulasi* plants; '*Kṛṣṇapriya*' is a synonym of *Tulasi*.)

Among the three stories mentioned above, it is obvious that the first is intended to glorify the power of the sage's penance (and to establish the superiority of Viṣṇu). The other three are meant to glorify women's chastity. But all the four stories may be said to have defamed both Śiva and Viṣṇu! We cannot but admit that it is our misfortune that such senseless stories have crept into the *Puraṇas* which we hold in veneration. So I believe that the wise may not disagree if I say that before accepting the *Puraaṇas* it is important to examine the validity if the relevant portions.[42]

---

42 The religion of India of the post-Vedic period conceived the three aspects of His personality as representing the three actions; namely, the creation, the maintenance and the destruction of the world. All the *Puraaṇas* have been composed based on this principle. As a result of such elevation of the Trinity, respect for other Vedic deities decreased. Originally the word *Indra* meant *Iiśvara* (Lord). (*Idi = aiśvarye, idi = ind, aiśvarya = iiśvaratva*); for this reason *Indra* is the most respected name in the Vedas. As a result of the Trinity being raised to the highest status, *Indra* lost his former glory. Since the Vedic names were transformed into peronalities diverse stories about the deities were shaped in the *Puraaṇas*. Many such stories depict the deities as being worse than men in character. Among these, one is the story of Ahalyaa.

Consequently, Indra has become a lustful figure, and in later poetry also he has been described so. In addition, many stories originated in the *Puraaṇas*, to establish that Indra's position was not eternal, that it could be achieved by anyone who performed hundred sacrifices, that Indra did not tolerate any one performing hundred sacrifiecs, and that if any one appeared to complete hundred sacrifices, Indra prevented the last from being performed, etc. (e.g. Sagara). Thus the greatness of Indra diminished and he became inferior to an earthly king. Moreover, there appeared many stories in which he begged the favour of human kings to destory his enemies. For this reason, in the modern religion of India based on the *Puraaṇas* Indra worship became obsolete. But in the Manusmṛti, which is prior to the *Puraaṇas* and later than the Veda, *Indra* means "soul", that is, "Supreme Soul":

प्रशासितारं सर्वेषां अणीयांसमणोरपि ।
रुक्माभं स्वप्नधीगम्यं तं विद्यात् पुरुषं परम् ।।
एतमेकं वदंत्यग्निं मनुमन्ये प्रजापतिम् ।
इन्द्रमेके परेप्राणं अपरे ब्रह्म शाश्वतम् ।।

praśaasitaaram sarveṣaam aṇiiyaamsamaṇorapi
rukmaabham svapnadhiigamyam tam vidyaat puruṣam param
eetamekam vadantyagnim manumanye prajaapatim
indrameke parepraaṇaṁ apare brahma śaasvatam

Of these two verses, the former describes the features of the "Supreme Person". The verse subsequent to it means: "Some people name this Person *agni* (अग्नि), some others *manu* (मनु), a few others *prajaapati* (प्रजापति), still some others *indra* (इन्द्र), a few persons *praaṇa* प्राण), and the rest as *śaaśvatabrahma* (शाश्वतब्रह्म). (The word *indriya* originated from *indra*. As said above, since Indra is *aatman* and the *indriyas* are the projections of the *aatman*, they are named *indriyas*. If we ponder over the meaning of the *mantra mayi indra indriyam dadhaatu* (मयि इन्द्र इन्द्रियं दधातु) quoted earlier in this work, a mantra uttered during the *agnikaarya* (अग्निकार्य), this fact will not remain unknown.

Since it is natural for the people, who know that gods have been described in the *Puraaṇas* as inferior to human beings, to speculate why they should not commit 'immoral acts' if gods themselves are guilty of such acts, the *Puraaṇa* favourites formed a command, to overcome this problem, that men should not imitate the acts of gods. On account of this, humble, religious people came to believe that gods cannot be questioned because they are capable of cleansing themselves of their sins, and that whatever they do, they are to be respected. Though there were some such discrepencies in the *Puraaṇas*, the learned, who knew that they (the *Puraaṇas*) were mythical in character, respected them because they infused devotion and culture. But it is accepted by all that, as authorities on *dharma*, *Puraaṇas* are inferior to the *smṛtis* and *smṛtis* to *śrutis*. As for Shankaracharya, he never accepts the authority of the *Puraaṇas* in his commentaries on the three *prasthaanas*, unlike some other preceptors.

All admit that during the Vedic period idol-worship did not exist. In that period, the worship of the Manifest in the form of offering some object (except water offering = *arghya*) was only through the Fire and so the Fire itself was considered a form of the deity. This kind of worship has come down to us upto this day. In the rituals connected with ceremonies like initiation, marriage etc. the worship through Fire alone is what is practised. In these rituals objects of any shape have absolutely no place. Only the optional rituals (worship etc.) are performed in the form of image worship. There is ample evidence to argue that worship of *Shivaliṅga*, in the form of a stone-symbol was responsible for the introduction of Idol-worship, which did not exist earlier in Hinduism. All the most ancient temples of our country are Siva temples. The symbol worshipped in those temples is never in the form of a living being; it is always in the

form of a simple stone. The *Sivaliṅgas* of those temples are mainly of two kinds: the first is the *udbhavaliṅga* (उद्भवलिंग) -the *liṅga* that has become manifest from the recess of the earth; the second is the "installed *liṅga*". (The difference between the two *liṅgas* is mainly in their size; the *liṅgas* in the temples happen to be much bigger than the *liṅgas* in houses and they are mostly shaped out of the pieces of granite. The *udbhavaliṅga* means the *liṅga* which is believed to have risen from the earth in a place of beauty and peace; this has no definite shape.) Such a stone may have been first worshipped by some unknown persons, and, as popularity increased, walls were built around it causing the formation of a temple. Some *udbhavaliṅgas* are within caves. Those caves themselves have become temples. Among the cave-temples, the Amaranath Temple of Kashmir is the most famous. The *Mahaabalesvara liṅga* (महाबलेश्वरलिंग) of Gokarna and the *Mañjunatha liṅga* (मञ्जुनाथलिंग) of Kadri (in our Mangalore) are *udbhavaliṅgas.* Among the installed *Śiva-liṅgas*, the *Viśvanaatha liṅga* (विश्वनाथलिंग) of Kashi (Benares), the *Mahaakaaleśvara liṅga* (महाकालेश्वरलिंग) of Ujjaini, and the *Raamanaathaliṅga* (रामनाथलिंग) of Rameshvar are the most famous. There is no doubt that the *liṅgas* named here have been worshipped since very ancient days. (*Mahaakaaleśvara* of Ujjaini and *Mahaabaleśvara* of Gokarna are referred to in Kalidasa's works. The hoary antiquity of the worship of the *Amaranaatha liṅga* (अमरनाथलिंग) is testified to by Kalhana's Raajataraṅginii.)

The symbols worshipped in the Vaiṣṇava temples happen to be invariably in the form of icons. Like the *liṅgas* of Siva temples, they never happen to be mere symbols. So it would not be wrong to suppose that much later than the worship of *Śivaliṅgas* the worship of *Vaiṣṇava* icons came into practice. For, it is quite logical to infer that in Hinduism, which did not have any kind of idol-worship in the beginning, for the reasons already mentioned, first started the symbol worship in the form of natural objects, next absorbed the worship of installed objects and lastly took into its fold the symbol worship in the form of the icons. The fact that none of the *Vaiṣṇava* temples happens to be as old as the Saiva temples mentioned above supports this position. As suggested earlier, being mainly yogic, Saivism would not endure icon worship. So the Saiva temples have mere symbols in them. Vaiṣṇavism is devotional. In order to make the common people devotional, the symbol should necessarily be in the form of a person. A symbol may be the object of meditation, but it cannot be the medium of inspiring devotion. Devotion is a form of love. All human beings naturally have the expression of love. Since it is a relation between two persons, a devotional cult requires an icon, which is anthropomorphic. For this reason, in all the *Vaiṣṇava* temples, an icon, in one form or another, is worshipped.

In the Saiva temples, icons are never seen, and only the symbol called *liṅga* is invariably worshipped. *Śivaliṅga* is often mistaken for Siva's penis. This error has arisen because of the Puranic stories mentioned earlier. This has led the modern historians to conclude that it is the vestige of the Phallus worship prevalent among the uncivilized societies in the earliest days. But I hope that, from the elaborate explanation offered so far, it must have been clear by now that the *liṅga* is not the representation of phallus but it is only a symbol of God Iiśvara.[43]

---

43 Since different peoples came to our country from time immemorial and settled here, different forms of worship practised by those people have been retained here and there. And the names of the deities of those people also have survived. Among such names, some have taken Sanskrit forms also in course of time. So it is impossible to deny the existence of Phallus Worship in

our country. It may be said that there is one example supporting its existence. I have heard that the form worshipped in the famous temple of Goddess *Kaamaakhyaa* (कामाख्या) in Assam is in the form of the private part of a woman and that it is the private part of Goddess *Paarvati.* This may delude some to believe that the worship of *śivaliṅga* is also the worship of Siva's private part. [This erroneous conception is supported by the Westerners with a Vedic statement. In the Ṛgveda, the expression *śisnadevaaḥ* (शिश्नदेवाः) is found. They say that this refers to the followers of Phallus Worship, and that this is the proof for the fact that Phallus Worship existed in India. Whenever a statement is shorn of the context its real meaning gets distorted. This is what has happened here. Saayaṇacaarya, who has commented upon the whole text of the Ṛgveda, has explained the word *śisnadevaah* as follows: शिश्नेन दीव्यन्ति क्रीडन्ति इति शिश्नदेवाः, अब्रह्मचर्या इत्यर्थः *(śiśnena diivyanti kriiḍanti iti śiśnadevaaḥ, abrahmacaryaa ityarthaḥ)* That is, 'people who are sensuous and without self-restraint'. He also says that Yaska's explanation too is the same. It is regrettable that it has become the habit now-a-days to misinterpret the Vedic passages taking them out of context.] As said earlier, the people of our country, who have fallen into the erroneous conception that *śivaliṅga* is the private part of Siva, mistake the container, placed under the *śivaliṅga* to collect the water of oblation, for the private part of Parvati, Siva's consort. It is not only the belief of common people; it is said that some books connected with Siva's worship also mention it. (I have also heard that in some books a philosophical interpretation is given that *śivaliṅga* and its base known as *Paaṇipiiṭha* (पाणिपीठ) (symbolically) represent combination of *Puruṣa* (पुरुष) and *Prakṛti* (प्रकृति) which symbolizes the whole creation.) Though such ridiculous ideas are prevalent, the reason for the Siva devotees not having any disgust about Siva's worship is that for a devotee any part of his deity happens to be equally holy. To the followers of other

[I feel that it will not be irrelevant to say something about Saivism in this context. Some of the Tamil scholars hold that Siva is a Dravidian deity and that Saivism originated in the south. For this contention, they adduce the reason that Ravana, king of Lanka, was a devotee of Siva. (Since Ravana lived in the island lying near Southern India, they believe that he was a Dravidian.) They add the story connected with the *Mahaabaleśvara liṅga* of Gokarna in further support. Every temple of our country has a story behind it. Those stories happen to be, for most part, fictitious. None of those who have heard the story about the most famous temple of Tirupati would deny the fact that the story is fanciful. If history is constructed out of these local legends, such history will be of the same value as the legends; it would not be worth the name "history". The statement that Saivism originated in the south is baseless; on the contrary, its origin in the extreme north, that is, on the Himalayan valleys, has been established on the basis of clear evidence.

religions and only to those who do not know the principle of devotion they may cause disgust. An example from Christianity may be mentioned: Christians firmly believe that the blood and flesh of the holy Jesus Christ whom they believe to be the incarnation of God, are holy. So in their Churches, the blood and flesh of Jesus are superimposed on the wine and bread placed on the altar, and they take it as holy food granted by God. They believe that on such occasion they get transformed into the blood and flesh of Jesus. It is not surprising that this would appear disgusting to the non-Christians and to those who cannot understand religious sentiments. Similarly though the *liṅga* has been erroneously taken to be Siva's phallus devotion to Siva has not been affected.

If Saivism had originated in the south, some southern mountain should have been the abode of Siva. And Paravati would have been born in some Southern mountain. She would not have been the daughter of the Himalayas and Siva would not have been the dweller of Kailasa. (All know that Mount Kailasa is to the north of even the Himalayas. Every year many pilgrims from our country visit the place.) Among the most famous Saiva pilgrim-centres, Rameshvara alone is in Tamilnadu. Another such centre is on the west coast of Karnataka. But the famous centres, namely, Amaranaatha, Kedaaranaatha, Paśupatinaatha and Muktinaatha are in the Himalayas. (In the Himalayas, Badariinaatha is a *Vaiṣṇava* pilgrimage centre.) Above all, Kashi (Benares), which can be mentioned as the crest-jewel of the Saiva pilgrimage centres, is in Northern India itself. According to the *Puraaṇas*, the heavenly *Gaṅgaa* (गंगा), before she reached the earth, descended on the head of Siva, proceeded from there under the name *Bhaagiirathii* (भागीरथी) towards the North Indian plain, flowed eastwards from there, and lastly into the Eastern Sea. (In many Siva temples, a vessel of water is hung above the *Sivaliṅga*, and water is made to fall, drop by drop, on the *liṅga*. The process seems to be symbolical of the story that *Gaṅgaa* fell on the locks of Siva. Further, it may be noted that in Siva worship the *abhiṣeka* (अभिषेक) (sacred bath of the deity) is the main act. Geographically also the origin of the *Gaṅga* is in the Himalayas. When all this is considered, it is evident that Siva's abode was within the range of the Himalayas. So, the statement that Saivism originated in Southern India and that Siva is a Dravidian deity bears no truth in it. If we continue this line of thinking, we come to the conclusion that Kashmir was the birth place of Saivism. It is known from Kalhana's Raajataraṅgini that the early inhabitants of Kashmir were Saivites and Serpent-worshippers. This might be the reason for the belief that Siva has serpents as his ornaments. One of the kings of Kashmir had the name *Raavaṇa*. The Raajataraṅginii

mentions that he was not a *Raakṣasa* (राक्षस) but only a human being, and that he ruled the country righteously. The story that Ravana, King of Lanka, was a devotee of Siva might have originated from this fact.[44] (Ravana, king of Lankaa, appears as a devotee of Siva only in the *Uttarakaaṇḍa* of The Ramayana. Many eminent scholars hold that this part of the epic is spurious.) It is an undisputed fact that the *Naatha* cult, which is a branch of Saivism came from North India to the South. Historians say that it came to South perhaps during the 9th -10th centuries. There is evidence to argue that even the Virashaivism of Karnataka contains the contributions of Naathism. Allama Prabhu was chosen as the President of the *Anubhavamaṇṭapa* founded by Basava. The name "Allama" is neither Kannada nor Sanskrit. It seems to resemble the names of the Kashmiris of that time. And the reason why nothing is known about the early life of Allama, may be that he was one of the "saints of North India.]

The discussion attempted till now regarding the nature of *Sivaliṅga* can be summarized as follows: the word *liṅga* in *Sivaliṅga* does not mean "phallus"; it means only the symbol of

44 It may appear that since *Mahaaviṣṇu* (महाविष्णु) is described as *śeṣaśaayin* (शेषशायिन्) (one who lies on the serpent named *śeṣa)* (शेष) in the *Puraaṇas* Viṣṇu also is related to the serpent. But that serpent is a mere symbol. The word *śeṣa* means "what remains". After the whole creation is dissolved, that is, at the end of the *Kalpa* (कल्प) (the biggest unit of time), the remainder being named *śeṣa*, the Supreme Being lies on it; this is the meaning of the symbol. Viṣṇu and the serpent are in no way related. *Mahaaśeṣa*, Viṣṇu's bed, is the primordial matter; it is not the name of a serpent. The serpent, Siva's ornament, has nowhere been symbolically interpreted like this.

Siva".[45] That a simple stone, instead of the form of Siva as described in the *Puraaṇas*, is worshipped in Siva temples, is because it is also a symbol of Siva, like the *liṅga* worshipped in houses.[46] That Siva is not worshipped in the form of an icon is because Saivism originated from yogic practices. Even to-day

45 In the praise of deities other than Siva also, there are instances of the divine form being mentioned as *liṅga*. Example: *parabrahmaliṅgam bhaje paaṇḍuraṅgam (Paaṇḍuraṅgaaṣṭaka)* (परब्रह्मलिंगं भजे पाण्डुरंगम् । - पाण्डुरंगाष्टक) *Paaṇḍuraṅga* is not Siva, but Vishnu. The form of *Paaṇḍuraṅga* is of human type, not of *śivaliṅga*. So *parabrahmaliṅga* here evidently means "the symbol of the 'Supreme Being', that is, the (conceived) form of the 'Supreme Being'.

46 Though in the Saiva temples the *liṅga* alone is worshipped on the walls of such temples, like those of *Hoysaleśvara* (होय्सळेश्वर) of Halebid which testify to the glory of sculptural art, there are carvings showing the diverse acts of Siva. These are not systematically worshipped; still it is known that in some Siva temples worship is offered to Siva in the form of icons. (Among these some are not of Siva's original form; mostly they are his sportive forms. Example: *Kaalabhairava, Viirabhadra* (कालभैरव, वीरभद्र) etc.) It is also worth noting that they are not very ancient Siva temples. I have heard that some such temples exist in Tamilnadu. But none of these is so universally famous as the Raamanaatha temple of *Raameśvara* (रामेश्वर) or as the *Bṛhadiiśvara* (बृहदीश्वर) temple of Tanjavur (both of Tamilnadu). Though Siva in the form of a dancer is worshipped in Chidambaram, the fact that no idol or any concrete form is visible in the sanctum sanctorum of this temple, and that the object worshipped there is known as *aakaaśaliṅga*; is worth noting. This situation in Chidambaram supports the argument presented by me that *Sivaliṅga* is a mere symbol.

Saivism considers meditation, but not devotion, as important. Since devotion is primary in Vaiṣṇavism, its main item in all the *Vaiṣṇava* temples, the icons of Viṣṇu or of his incarnations are worshipped. Though *śaalagraama* could have been important in Viṣṇu worship in the early days, its importance is not seen in the *Vaiṣṇava* temples. It has retained its importance only inside the *sampuṭas* (सम्पुट) (caskets) of God worshipped privately in the houses. The reason for the origin of temples is the collective worship. The icon or the symbol worshiped there must be of sufficiently big size. The *śaalagraama* is not a man-made symbol. Nor is it of a big size. The fact that it does not suit collective worship may be the reason why it lost its importance in temples. The fact that Vaiṣṇavism does not have meditation but devotion at its centre could be the reason why the *śaalagraama* was relegated to the background in the *Vaiṣṇava* temples and the icon of Viṣṇu came into prominence.

- : ॐ तत् सत् : -

≡ Ψ ≡

Appendix - II

THE SARASVATII AND THE DṚṢADVATII

Something has been written in Chapter I of this book about these two names (Page 6). Being two rivers, these form the borders of the region known as *Brahmaavarta*, as mentioned there. But since both these rivers have now dried up it is impossible to imagine the place in which they flowed. A casual attempt to solve this problem has been made in a book (title forgotten) published by the *Aaryasamaaja* (In it it has been mentioned that these two rivers, namely, the *Sarasvatii* and the *Dṛṣadvatii* were the borders in the west and the east of *Aaryaavarta*, that they were the same as the *Sindhu* and the *Brahmaputra*, and that the regions known as *Aaryaavarta* and *Brahmaavarta* were the same. But in the passage quoted from the Manusmṛti in the present book (Page 7) it is said that the eastern and the western borders of *Aaryaavarta* were the eastern and the western seas themselves and the southern and the northern borders were the mountains, namely, the Himalayas and the Vindhyas. Further it has been said that the region between the *Sarasvatii* and the *Dṛṣadvatii* was named *Brahmaavarta*. For these reasons, one will not fail to understand that the statements in the book published by the *Aaryasamaaj* - *Aaryaavarta* and *Brahmaavarta* were the names of the same region, and that *Sarasvatii* and *Dṛṣadvatii* were the names of the Sindhu and the Brahmaputra - are not reliable.

Besides, the names *Sindhu* and *Brahmaputra* are masculine in Sanskrit. As for *Sarasvatii* and *Dṛṣadvatii*, they are feminine. Generally the names of all rivers in Sanskrit are feminine. It is only exceptionally that a few are masculine. The rivers whose names are masculine are called *nadas* instead of *nadis* in Sanskrit. So the Sindhu and the Brahmaputra are *nadas*, not *nadis*. Therefore it is clear that the names *Sarasvatii* and *Dṛṣadvatii* are not applicable to the nadas, namely, the Sindhu and the Brahmaputra.[47]

47 It is unanimously accepted that it is the *Sindhu* (Indus) that caused the land of *Bhaarata* (India) to be called *Hindusthaana*. So it is quite proper to believe that the river had the name *Sindhu* in very ancient days. And this is further clear from the fact that the river had the name *Sindhu* in the time of Yaaska (6th century B.C.), author of *Nirukta*, as known from his mentioning the Vedic river *Suṣomaa* to mean the *Sindhu*. Since that river had the feminine name *Suṣoma* some may suspect that it is possible the masculine *Sindhu* might be the same as the feminine *Sarasvatii*. But it would be worth while to remember that the meaning of the word *Suṣomaa* and that of the word *Sarasvatii* have no mutual relation whatsoever. (The *Sindhu* is the biggest among the rivers flowing in India. The word *Suṣomaa* means "a very big current having many tributaries". And the word *Sindhu* popularly means "the sea" - all the names meaning the sea are masculine - because it is as big as the sea the name *Sindhu* became current as applicable to it.) As for the *Brahmaputra*, because it has no feminine synonym there is no possibility of the *Dṛṣadvatii* being synonymous with *Brahmaputra*. For these reasons the argument of the Aaryasamaajists is baseless.

But the *Sarasvatii* and the *Dṛṣadvatii* are now mere names, and they are not to be seen. Tradition has it that both of them have now dried up. It is widely known from very ancient days that the *Sarasvatii*, one of them, used to come and join the *Gaṅgaa* and the *Yamunaa* at Prayaga. This confluence is even now called *Triveeṇiisaṅgama* (the meeting of three currents.) But what we see there is only the confluence of the *Gaṅgaa* and the *Yamunaa*. From this it gets established that the *Sarasvatii* which used to come and join them in the distant past has now dried up for an unimaginably long time. Let us now examine whether any evidence to the fact that they have dried up, in addition to the traditional statement, is available.

To my limited intellect it appears that the very names of theirs are indicative of the fact that they had the character of drying up. The meaning of the word *sarasvatii* is, "a river full of lakes". If any river happens to be full of lakes, its current cannot be continuous; indeed, it would be broken at considerable distances forming unconnected lakes. Only in the rainy season such a river will be full and uniform in all places and later when the current is weakened its bottom at low levels will be full of water. When it is known that the *Sarasvatii* was

a river of this kind it would not fail to strike one that when the river was being named the character of its going to dry up might have been taken into account. The propriety of the name is clear. So it appears to me that it is reasonable to think that the *Sarasvatii* which once came to Prayaga and caused the confluence to be named *Triveṇii* dried up little by little till it became invisible to the extent of not being traced even.

Let us now think of the name, *Dṛṣadvatii*. The word *drsat* means "rock". If this meaning is applied, the fact that the *Dṛṣadvatii* was a river full of rocks becomes clear. Generally, it is natural for rivers to have rocks at short distances. If we ask ourselves why the particular river alone was named so, we shall have to conclude that even when the water flowed the rocks must have been visible in that river. If the rocks in a river are prominently visible, the river must be such that it would flow fully only in the rainy season and would later have weak currents only near the rocks. So it will not fail to strike one that the *Dṛṣadvatii* also must have been a river having the character of drying up even when it was named.

Many Brahmin families, though they migrated from the banks of the *Sarasvati* long ago and settled in northern Kashmir as well as in the *Gauḍadeśa*, are still calling themselves *Saarasvatas.*[48] But as far as I know, the *Dṛṣadvatii* does not go with any such name. This makes us infer that before the *Sarasvatii* dried up the *Dṛṣadvatii* must have dried up. But it may be imagined that since the dictionaries

48 It seems that some others settled in *Kuśasthala*, a place near the Vindhya range. The reason for this inference of mine is that one Brahmin group which has settled in Goa and calls itself *Saarasvata* has the name *Kuśasthalis*. When the Brahmin group which came from *Gauḍadeśa* and settled in Goa and the other Brahmin group which came from *Kuśasthala* (and settled in Goa) had to be known distinctily the two distinct names - *Gauḍasaarasvata* and *Kuśasthalisaarasvata* - were current (at the beginning of the present century) as applicable to separate classes. The Brahmin group which we now-a-days generally call *Saarasvata* used to be called *Kuśasthali* by my grandfather.

mention that the *Dṛṣadvatii* was a tributary of the *Sarasvatii* (See Apte's Dictionary) it had no importance and that its name might have merged with that of *Sarasvatii*. Some other rivers of our country also testify to this fact. Example: though the *Yamunaa* is a big river its name is not heard after it joins the *Gaṅgaa* and it is called *Gaṅgaa* itself. The *Tuṅgabhadraa* of our Karnataka, though it is not small, after it joins the *Kṛṣṇaa* its separate name is lost and it is called the Krishna itself. Similarly after the *Dṛṣadvatii* joined the *Sarasvatii* the name *Dṛṣadvatii* must have disappeared and the name *Sarasvatii* alone might have remained till Prayaga. For this reason it cannot be said with certainty that the *Saarasvatas* lived in *Brahmavarta*, a region between the *Sarasvatii* and the *Dṛṣadvatii*. It is possible that they might have settled on the bank of the *Sarasvatii* flowing further from the point of the confluence.

No ancient writing seems to mention the point where the *Sarasvatii* and the *Dṛṣadvatii* originated and in which direction they flowed. None of the rivers originating in the Himalayas and flowing in *Aaryaavarta* seems to have dried up. For the snow melting in the hot season fills them with water and they remain full of water in all seasons. When this is considered it strikes one that if the *Sarasvatii* and the *Dṛṣadvatii* originated in the Himalayas there is no reason for them to dry up.

Then, what could have been the point of the origin of these two rivers? In Northern India the only other mountain range is *Araavalii*. So it is proper to infer that these rivers originated in the *Araavalii* and that after they joined each other they became a single river, flowed eastwards in a place sufficiently distant from the southern bank of the *Yamunaa* and joined the *Yamunaa* at Prayaga.

It would not be wrong to say that the region to the east and north of the *Araavalii* is now a desert. It does not appear that it was a desert during very ancient time. For even to-day the desert is expanding to the east or north. So it seems to me that it would not be wrong to suppose that in an unkown period the regions near the *Araavalii*, like the other regions of North India, were quite rich in water; the regions had sufficient rainfall, many rivers originated in the range and flowed from the west to the east. Since the *Dṛṣadvatii*

was a tributary of the *Sarasvatii*, the place *Brahmaavrta* had for its borders the *Araavalii* in the west and the *Sarasvatii* and the *Dṛṣadvatii* in the south and north. If this inference is accepted, the conclusion that the triangular region which existed to the west from the point of the junction of these rivers to the *Araavalii* had the name *Brahmaavarta* gets established.

In the sixth page of the present book I have tried to explain as clearly as possible the reason for *Brahmaavarta* to be considered the holiest in *Aaryaavarta* which itself was called *puṇyabhuumi* (a holy place). If my inference that the region was the place of the origin of the Veda is valid, the conclusion reached by the Western scholars to the effect that the Ṛgveda was composed when the people whom they mention as having come from the central Asia to India under the name *Aarya* (as they decide) had settled in the Punjab is thrown overboard. If this conclusion of the westerners were true, while the seven important rivers are named in the Ṛgveda (6-3-6) the sequence should have begun from the Sindhu, the biggest river in west Punjab followed by the rivers flowing to its east, one by one. But if we consider the fact that, as seen in a hymn of the Ṛgveda (6-36)– the *Gaṅgaa* flowing in the east is mentioned first, then those flowing to its west such as the *Yamunaa, the* Sarasvatii,[49] the *Sutudri* (Sutlej) etc. are named subsequently and at last the *Suṣoma* (This is mentioned by Yaska as another name of the Sindhu - Nirukta, P. 423) appears – the conclusion that the Ṛgveda was composed in the Punjab may, without the least doubt, be discarded as fictitious. I feel that since in the context of

49 Since the *Sarasvatii* is also mentioned with the important rivers in the Ṛgveda hymn quoted above, it appears that during the time of the composition of that hymn it must have been, full of water. It has been said that the word *Sarasvatii* was indicative of the features of drying up. Here, it may appear, that there is a self-contradiction in my words. But when it is understood that the lakes which were then the parts of the *Sarasvatii* were not small, but were quite big and that the current flowing from one lake to another was not weak but big enough to appear like a river the apparent contradiction will disappear.

mentioning the names of the famous rivers, the *Gaṅgaa* is mentioned first and then those to its west are named in sequence the place of the origin of the Vedas is not the Punjab but the region known as *Brahmaavarta* which is to the far south in between the *Sarasvatii* and the *Dṛṣadvatii.*

According to the above inference of mine, it is not easy to guess why the *Sarasvatii* and the *Dṛṣadvatii* originating in the *Araavalii* range dried up. It might only be said without any doubt that eastern and northern region to the *Araavalii* became a desert and the two rivers mentioned earlier dried up for the same reason. Only geologists can establish the causes of such an occurrence and the period when it occurred. It is my feeling that if they are able to know this with certainty, their knowledge will help them infer the time when the Veda originated.

-- % --

NEW LIGHT

After the manuscript of this book was sent to the press, All India Radio broadcast the news of a discovery upsetting the conclusion established previously by the archaeologists regarding the origin of human species, as brought to light by scientists themselves in Madhya Pradesh. The news is as follows: in an excavation conducted in Madhya Pradesh a human skull formed into a shell-like stone has been discovered; when its time was estimated scientifically the skull seemed to date as back as two lakhs of years. Is it not established by this that the place of human origin is not Africa as previously inferred by scientists? As research is carried on in this line it is not impossible that human skulls may be found in different regions. Therefore as presented in the 38th, 39th and the 40th pages of the present book, my opinion that it is not true that human species originated in a particular place and that it originated wherever the conditions for it were fulfilled is being further substantiated.

– # –

A SPECIAL NOTE

On 28-2-1992 All India Radio, Bangalore, broadcast that in China an evidence has been discovered proving my statement in the note entitled "New Light" to the effect that further research in this line will rule out the impossibility of human skulls being discovered in different regions. In the excavation conducted there two ancient skeletons have been discovered and scientific examination dates them as far back as four lakhs of years. By these discoveries, all the conclusions arrived at by the westerners regarding the place and time of human evolution have been proved false! So I repeat the same statement of mine that in other parts of the world also similar instances may not fail to come to notice.

* * *

List of Publications

1. Dravidian and Negro African 75.00
   Dr. U. P. Upadhyaya & Dr.(Mrs.) Susheela Upadhyaya
2. Sannata 15.00
   M. Shankar
3. Folk Epics of Tulunadu 15.00
   Dr. U. P. Upadhyaya
4. Karnataka Puppetry 25.00
   S. A. Krishnaiah
5. Folklorisitics and Indian Folklore
   Dr. Peter J. Claus & Frank J. Korom
   (Hard Bound) . . . . 120 . 00
   (Ordinary) . . . . 80 . 00
6. Tulu Lexicon
   Dr. U. P. Upadhyaya (Ed.)
   Vol. I (Special) . . . . 60 . 00
   (Ordinary) . . . . 40 . 00
   Vol. II. (Special) . . . . 80 . 00
   (Ordinary) . . . . 60 . 00
   Vol. III. (Special) . . . . 100 . 00
   (Ordinary) . . . . 80 . 00
7. Govinda Pai Memorial Museum 15.00
   Dr. H. Raghunatha Bhat
8. Kadyanata 150.00
   A. V. Navada & Gayathri Navada (Tr. Dr. N. T. Bhat)
9. A Comparative Study of Tulu Dialects 150.00
   Dr. K. Padmanabha Kekunnaya
10. Mylaralinga Tradition 15.00
    M. N. Venkatesh
11. Junjappa 15.00
    Dr. T. N. Shankaranarayana
12. A Story of Kogga Kamath's Marionettes . . . . . 250 .00
    Bhaskar Kamath